

Special - Anarchy in the US Summer Tour

A Journal of Desire Armed

Anarchy

Dot Matrix on
Penetrating
Leftist Code

Andy Robinson
on State Abuse
of Ethnic Identity

Censored: What
Was Slashed from
Dreams of Freedom?

#62/Fall-Winter 2006

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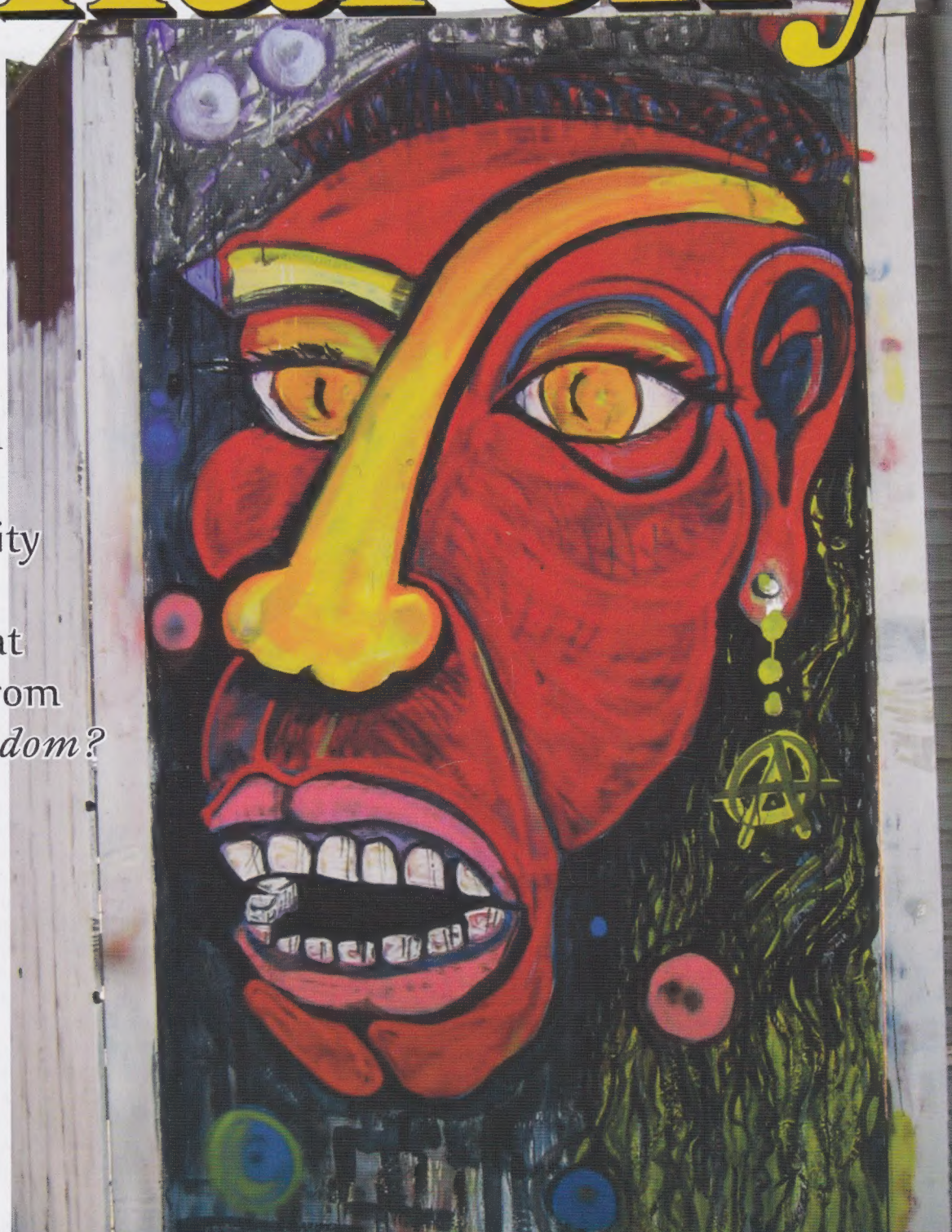
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Reviews include: American Methods, The Blast, Clandestines, Saharasia,
Suffled How it Gush, We Who Are Dark, Without a Glimmer of Remorse,

Toward a society based on mutual aid, voluntary cooperation & the liberation of desire

Trying for Springs by Leona Benten

More faults are committed while we are trying to oblige than while we are giving offense. - Tacitus

As people who reject the status quo, we are all critics. But most of us have learned how to critique badly, and so we either are, or are perceived to be, judgmental, dogmatic, sloppy, and ideological, as opposed to helpful, contextual and interesting.

Anarchist culture, to the extent that it operates on middle class white (protestant) values, is a culture of interpersonal niceness, with a mythology that tells us that people respond better to support and that support always looks like calm voices and careful communication, that good intent on everyone's part is not only essential but is always apparent. (If we are paying attention, we can all remember times when people have said sadistic things to us in a calm voice, and other times when people have hurt us needlessly from good intentions.) Sometimes none of the above is true, frequently it doesn't need to be true, and in fact we are hampered by the assumption that it is true. Not only that, but support and care look different coming from different people. Especially in a culture that has mixing of diverse peoples, it is inappropriate to expect that *nice*, *support*, or *care*, will (or should) always look the same. The homogenization of what support is supposed to look like increases as more and more people rely on and learn from therapists—people trained in formal institutions to interact with their clients in specific ways (ways that are considered neutral, but that reflect and promote values from a specific culture). And many times this increasingly narrow range of options means that our bottom line is departure, that is, the conflict resolution tactic that we fall back on more and more is the abandonment of the conflict, be it embodied in person, place, or situation. This tendency towards abandonment seems to increase how often and desperately people cling to the *rhetoric* of community. *Community* comes to be misunderstood as a place where everyone likes each other, where everyone agrees with each other; it could be better understood as a place where people appreciate what they like about each other and live with what they don't like, where there is enough of a buffer of size and variety to *allow* that and where, even if and when people leave, they don't disappear.

If we broaden our range of conflict options, what do we have? Talking to people more, and more creatively, about our problems, and being engaged in other people's problems more and better than we are now. The necessity of being around long enough to see things

through, and (if we travel) of coming back frequently enough, and for long enough, to maintain connections and information about what is going on. The need to become tougher people, who challenge each other emotionally as well as ideologically and ethically, who ask each other (and ourselves) hard questions including "how do we live with insoluble discrepancies?" The point of these hard conversations is to increase our ability to meet each other's needs in real life situations, from violence to arrest to drug use to childraising to dying.

What kind of support do we need to learn in order to become tougher (that is, able and willing to keep fighting for what we want when things are difficult)? Obviously there is not one answer for this. Just as obviously, we are all traumatized by this culture, and to the extent that we are explicitly and consciously outside of the mainstream, we get stepped on and beaten up. So being gentle with ourselves and each other is appropriate. But not *always* appropriate. The more monolithic the concept of support comes to be, the more proud or comfortable the role of victim, the less likely we are to recognize our full range of options for acting in the world.

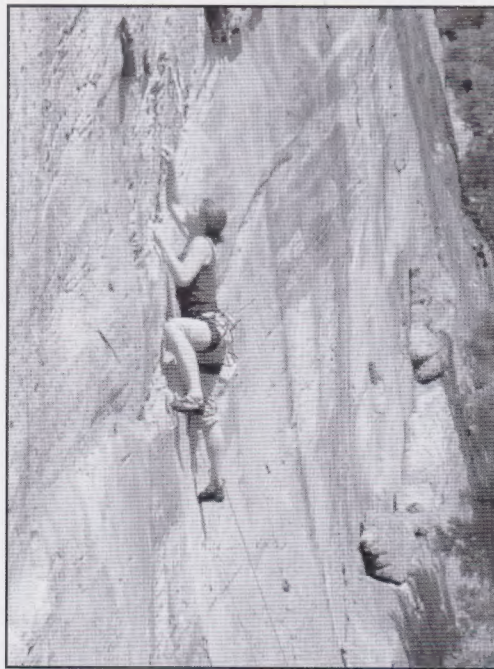
An appropriate toughness includes being able to avoid getting wrapped up in questions of intention. (Intention is too often brought up as a way to manipulate and deflect.) The ability to get something useful out of someone's critique does not depend on how well-intentioned the critic is. How many stories have we heard of people who were told they couldn't do something and were motivated *to succeed* by that resistance? How many times are we told that we can succeed by people who care nothing for us and merely want to sell us something?

Anarchists have chosen to be against most things in this culture, have chosen to fight on most possible fronts. As part of that fight, we take on our deepest assumptions about what we are taught, about appropriate relationships to other people and the rest of the world. This requires being tough in a way that *nice* society doesn't teach us or support. How do we learn to be tough in the ways that we need to be?

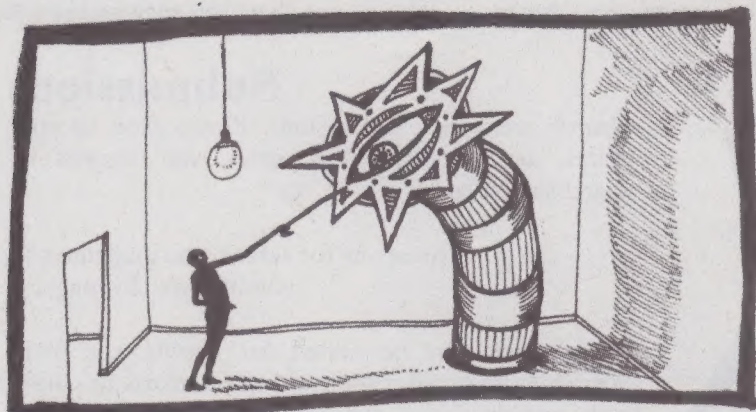
How well we are who we want to be is an issue of luck, which we can't do anything about, and of will, which we can.

A good critic is the sorcerer who makes some hidden spring gush forth unexpectedly under our feet.

- François Mauriac



Discontents



Anarchy

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Inside Anarchy

So many things have happened this summer. As some of you know from reading entries on our website, Aragorn! did a summer tour throughout the Midwest and some of the Eastern states, joined periodically by Leona, Lawrence, and Ariel. To give props to all the people who made that trip possible would fill this page, so instead, check out Aragorn!s blog (linked at www.anarchymag.org), where there is at least a beginning of an appropriate list. Ariel deserves special mention for her helpfulness.

Speaking of the website, we are continuing to add interactive features, from more blogs to the ability to recommend books for review, and to grade sections of the magazine.

C.A.L. Press is now a federally recognized non-profit, meaning that all you people with big bucks—who have been searching ceaselessly for tax-deductible donation opportunities—can find refuge with us.

We haven't yet gotten the podcast off the ground (the summer to-do list got seriously overbooked), but it continues to be on its way. And friends have taken on scanning all the old issues of *Anarchy* so the archives should be available sooner than we thought.

New on the website is a page with information about things and skills that we could particularly use. While money is always the most urgent request (at least until printers start bartering), there are all kinds of skills that we could use some access to. And, since most of our money troubles would be over if we could get even a just a couple hundred more subscribers, we are also offering deals for people who help their friends to subscribe—see the Fine Print and From C.A.L. Press pages for details. We have also added to the books that you can choose when you get an 8-issue subscription—see the inside back cover. If you're on

the list for *Withered Anarchism* and want to change to another title, let us know.

This issue also inaugurates two new columns, The Egoist Encyclopedia by Wolfi Landstreicher, who we are delighted to welcome back to a regular schedule with us, and Anarchy and Anxiety by Liana Doctrines. Of course we also have our regular columns, including Loose Canons, the ever popular Association of Anarchist Astronauts, the increasingly tactical Anarchy and

Strategy and Anarchy 101—this time written by our resident expert on the Spanish Revolution, who has a hard time containing himself on the topic.

Significant current events include the release of Rob los Ricos after a seven-year prison sentence, and the death of Murray Bookchin, who, despite his rejection of anarchism, we must acknowledge for having provided so much fuel for so many of us for so many years.

This issue is lighter on reviews, to make room for Andy Robinson's article on the state's manipulation of identity, and Aragorn!s report back. We ameliorate that lightness with Harold Barclay's extensive review. Dot Matrix, undaunted by responses

to her Science article, visits us again with a short but pithy deconstruction of Leftist lingo. And Mitchell Verter takes the opportunity to display text that was removed without his permission from *Dreams of Freedom*, published by AK Press.

We have a second poll ready for you, and of course the letters section is replete with a full range of responses to events in the world, including events in *Anarchy*.

Welcome to this newest issue. We hope to see you again often.

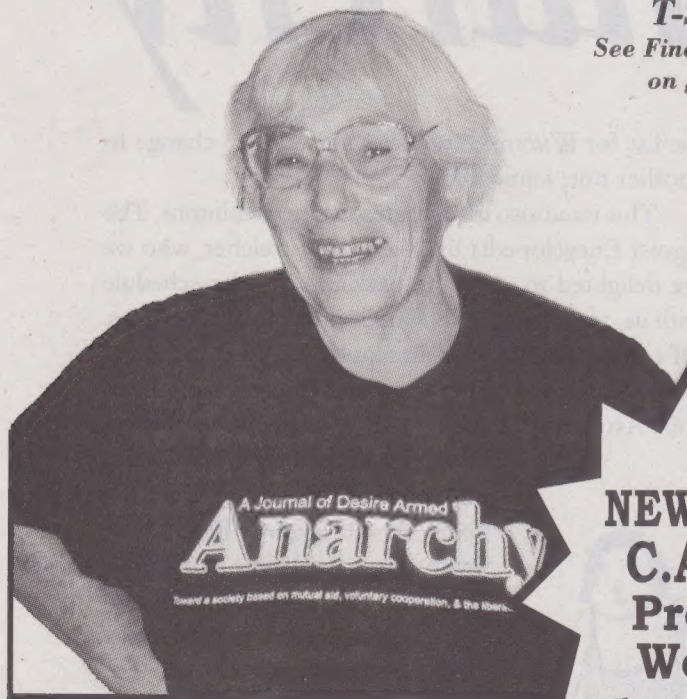


dan lewis

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- **Coming Soon!** *Anarchy* magazine archives: We are in the process of bringing much of the content from the past 60 issues of the magazine into a digital format.

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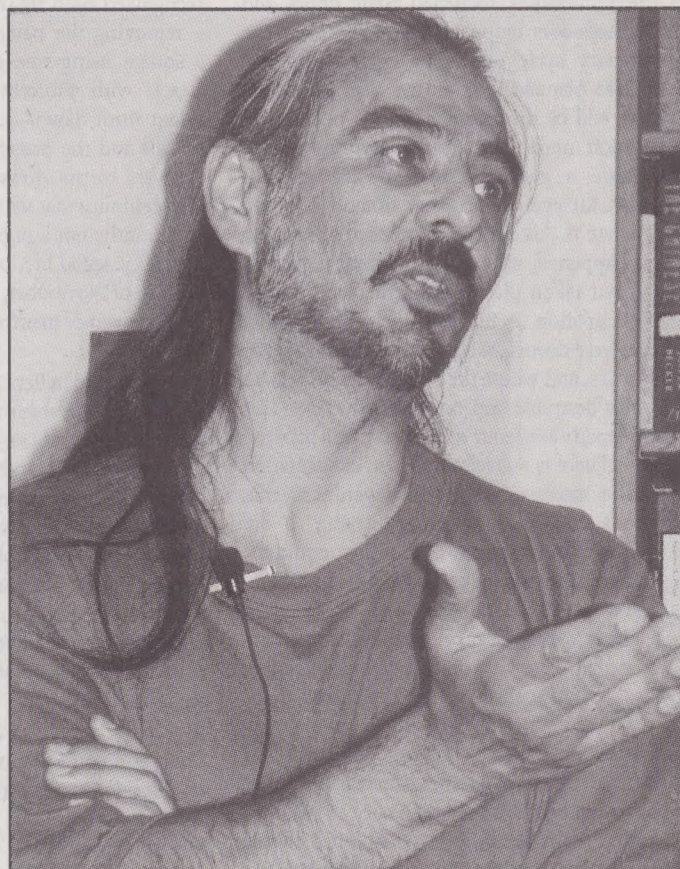
Finally Out!

Rob los Ricos, writer, reviewer and long term friend of *Anarchy*, was released from prison on June 29, 2006, after serving time for hitting a cop with a rock during a protest in Eugene, OR.

Rob stayed busy during his seven year incarceration, including writing many letters (mail correspondence helped "save his life"), taking up guitar, running, speech-making, and writing reviews and essays for *Green Anarchy* and *Anarchy* as well as (with Free Luers—another anarchist prisoner) pieces that were compiled into a zine called *Heartcheck*. Rob was one of the prisoners to bring a successful lawsuit against prison authorities for confiscating mail with circle a's for being "gang-related." As well, Rob and other folks in Portland, OR, formed the Anarchist Prisoner's Legal Aid Network to support imprisoned anarchists.

Currently dealing with the culture shock that is an unavoidable part of ending a multi-year prison sentence, Rob is speaking at anarchist forums. You can also contact him through his blog at <http://roblosricos.blogspot.com/>.

At least one Bay Area event is planned for Rob during Labor Day weekend. For more information, keep an eye on the *Anarchy* website, www.anarchymag.org.



Rob speaking in Portland after his release

Murray Bookchin, R.I.P.

As we were preparing for press, we received the news that Murray Bookchin died of heart failure early Sunday morning, July 29, 2006. While Bookchin repudiated anarchism years ago, there is no denying his impact on anarchist theory.

Next issue will include more on Bookchin's significance to current thinking.

In the meantime, our condolences to Bookchin's family and friends.



Murray Bookchin & Albert Meltzer

THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE

By the occupation committee of the Sorbonne in exile¹

The students went back to their studies. The universities reopened their doors and the professors reopened their pie-holes. The planetary cycle of life in micro-doses will end, as planned – as always – in June: first there will be the exams and then people will vacation under the sun. Everything would indicate a perfect return to normal if it wasn't for everybody's very notable effort to simulate it. An effort to pretend that nothing has happened, as if a very different normality had not taken place during the two months of occupation. A normality in which lecture halls were dorms, neighbors were comrades or enemies, and where the struggle made human beings desirable and not just seductive. This entire petty academic world is trying a little too hard. There is a feverishness, an exaggeration in the expressions, an awkwardness that reveals what they are really trying to do: to erase the evidence that things could be different, the evidence that life doesn't have to be like this caged hamster race.

In fact there is no such thing as a return to normal. There is a *process of normalization*: an all-out war against the *persistence of the event*. We are not talking here about a simple realization of such commonly accepted facts towards the end of the movement as the police role taken by the unions, the need to resort to property destruction, the joy of a life of blocking the economy rather than being formatted to serve it one day, or the return of the use of fire as an elementary political practice. We are talking about *friendships*. Every friendship maintains a hint of the circumstances in which it was born, of the moment of first encounter. The friendships that began here will always carry in them a reminder of the faint smell of tear gas, the glare from a car on fire, a crashing display window, the distant clamor of a riot.

The unionists, the leftists, the militants all lived a social movement. One of many others. The "social movements," with their rituals repeated a hundred times, always falling apart at the end, are something tolerated locally. They belong to the folklore of this country. "To our shame" say some, "to our glory" think others. Either way, the social movements are part of the carnival episode of French-style democratic management, and after which everything gets back in order. Those in power can act like royalty as long as they give the populace the right to mimic

1789. As for us, we lived an *event*. An event is recognized both by the intensity it produces – removing the paving stones in a third of a square using tree grates, coordinating an attack with Molotov cocktails, discussing a text until dawn—just like by the flaws it reveals and the possibilities it unveils. What we want to put down in writing here is the irreversibility that we gained, what makes the last months not a digression in the regulated course of social life, but a second wave, after the fire of November, in the quiet rise of the groundswell of insurrection.

1.

A slogan heard in Rennes: "We are not pacifists. We are fighting a war against capitalism." The entire march echoes it. Later, the pacifists defend the police ranks with their fists. Finally, they are expelled from the demonstration. A banner "We are all *casseurs*" (vandals) is voted upon by the assembly at the University of Rennes 2, and becomes the lead banner for a wild demo in Paris, where the offices of the Socialist Party, of a liberal satirical newspaper, of banks, and temporary employment agencies are all smashed up.

2.

There is no question of violence; there is only taking sides in a war that is already going on, and the question is, then, of the adequate means for victory.

3.

For the entire duration of the movement we witnessed a permanent police operation aimed at distinguishing between the good protesters and the evil *casseurs*. As the weeks went by, in Paris, *casseur* first meant "anarcho-autonomist fighting the police in front of the Sorbonne," then it became "an out-of-control individual coming to pick a fight with the forces of order at Place de la Nation," and finally "youth from the disadvantaged suburbs, beaters of protesters, thieves of cell phones at Invalides." At the end of its semantic drift, the *casseur* was not breaking anything anymore—he was lynching the demonstrators. The term could finally be seen for what it is: an empty signifier at the exclusive service of the police. The police have this monopoly: *to forge the profile of the threat*. By designating its most dedicated elements as foreign to the movement, the police cut off the movement from itself, from its own power, making it foreign to its own potential for confrontation,

to what makes it serious. Today that profile is of the criminal-immigrant, the "barbarian from the suburbs." Thus by alleging that "foreigners" are potential subversives, the police insinuate that a good Frenchman has no reason to become one, when in reality there have never been so many of those who don't feel at home anymore within the funeral decor of the capitalist metropolis.

4.

Of course screaming "we are all *casseurs*" is not about asserting oneself, but about thwarting the police operation. Admitting property destruction as a political practice means to articulate the daily existence of banks, of display windows, and trendy stores as moments in a silent war. It means that at the same time as we destroy the physical thing we destroy the self-evidence of its existence. Finally, it means a clear break from the democratic management of the conflict which comfortably allows for demonstrations against this or that as long as no position taken is followed by actions.

5.

What we're talking about is a *police operation*. In this police force it is unnecessary to distinguish between policemen, unionists, journalists, bureaucrats, and politicians since their complicity is so blatant. Journalists' clichés served police investigations while the forces of order of the CGT were bludgeoning our comrades, delivering them to the riot cops, and bragging about it in the newspapers the next day. Everyone collaborated in creating a real rift between *casseurs* and demonstrators. But they didn't really succeed except for once, in Paris on March 23. Everywhere else the lack of distinction dreaded so much by the Ministry of the Interior worked wonders – "if there was a connection between the students and the suburbs everything would be possible. Including a general explosion and an atrocious end of these last five years." Strasbourg, Nantes, Grenoble, Toulouse, Rennes, Lille, Drancy, Caen, Rouen—never in France's recent history have so many cities seen regular nights of rioting.

6.

On March 21 a demonstration of high school and college students ends at Luxembourg. At the head of the march are about 200 guys from the suburbs, and during the entire march the demo's marshals are tightening their ranks to

isolate any crew that may approach. Finally, the bureaucrats decide to divert the march before it reaches its destination, abandoning the group at the front to the riot police and the plainclothes cops. Two days later — the Invalides. A demonstration more protected than ever and targeted for robbery and beatings by those who had been politely kept away. We wonder why!

7.

There are two ways of moving in a street that has become hostile territory, the property of cops, cars, and surveillance cameras: moving in a march or in a crew. For the march everyone arrives individually, people get together for a few hours with their Comrades, they bray a bunch of chants in which they can't make themselves believe anymore. On more enthusiastic days they sing songs that would make their skin crawl if they still meant anything, like the Internationale. Luckily a sound system arrives to cover the muteness of the assembly and the emptiness of the relationships. It is a little walk to help the digestion of unionized livestock, a solitary procession guaranteed by the march's marshals. The crew, on the other hand, arrives together. Maybe they're packing some weapons. They have some idea about what they've actually come to do here: fight the cops, burn Paris, liberate the Sorbonne, trash some stores, grab some cell phones, kick some journalist's or demonstrator's ass. They move together as one, even when there's fifty of them. If one runs, everyone runs; if one fights, everyone fights; if one gets beaten, same thing. Reflexes of a pack. Common jargon. Tendency to be stupid, to follow, to turn into a lynch mob. Extreme mobility. Hostility to what is unknown, to what is static. In recent years these two ways of moving in Paris have intersected many times. Including on March 8 and later at Invalides. Each time the confrontation turned to the advantage of the crews. Each time the individual, separated from the march, with his freedom of expression, his right to be himself, to have his cell phone, his bank account, his dreadlocks, escaped injury, but was traumatized by fifteen-year-olds. Traumatized by a cruel alternative: to get organized in his own crew, or end up beaten on the spot. Unless one accepts this truth as inevitable: *the police are a precondition for the liberal individual*. It is this evidence that everyone tried to deny in a brutal bout of dishonesty.

8.

One doesn't experience community as an identity but as practice, as *common practice*. Identity rushes back every time the practice

recedes. Where there was an occupation, where shit was being smashed up, where walls were being tagged with graffiti, where cars were being rolled over, there was never a question of social origin, there was never a question of high school students, suburbs, or petit-bourgeois college students.

9.

The CPE law (Young Workers Law targeting those under 26) was first and foremost a pretext. A pretext for mobilization for the union organizations, a pretext for the college students for blockades, a pretext for revolt for many. It was so much a pretext that the law being repealed was not experienced as a victory, but a simple disappearance of the pretext. The dominant idea of the movement was the feeling of being fucked with, the feeling of being *cheated*. Reactive, moderate—but powerful. It is because of this moderation that the movement came to use radical practices, practices that were appropriate for the war of this time: attacking the police and blocking the economy. Through these practices the movement effectively joined the *piqueteros* of Argentina, the insurgents of Algeria, and the rioters of November.

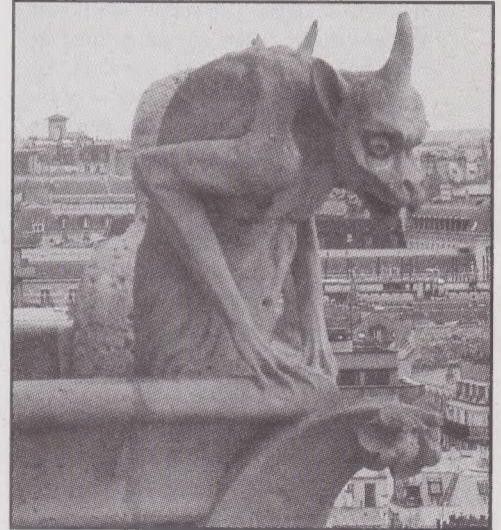
10.

The content of any struggle rests with the practices it adopts, not the ends it proclaims. We are talking here about a pretext because when we were charging at the riot cops with the shout "down with the CPE," we could have yelled any other battle cry to give ourselves courage; and we were not alone screaming "CPE, we don't care, we don't want to work at all" taking over the railroad tracks. The real content of the movement was actually blocking the economy and attacking the forces of order, interrupting of the circulation of goods, and liberating territory from police occupation. By wanting to use *in and of themselves* the means that we gave ourselves meant entering the insurrectionary process.

11.

The struggle against the CPE was supposed to be a struggle against precariousness. That's what the unions said; precariousness, a convenient and vague term, invokes for them some biblical reckoning befalling the wage earner and depicts their own attachment to the old work order. That's what the newspapers are saying, without a shred of understanding. And that's what the negrist (followers of Antonio Negri) recyclers are saying, who see in the struggle yet another step towards the inevitable guaranteed income, a comical synthesis of socialism and cybernetics. The slogans of the movements certainly haven't added to the cla-

rity of the debate. The weak reflex of deducing that "CPE no, no, no" means "CDI yes, yes, yes" (Long Term Contract that currently exists in France), meaning defending the status quo of exploitation because otherwise the exploitation would increase, should have been met by the radical response of opposing both the CPE and the CDI. The response should have



been to advance, against the simple refusal of precariousness, a *refusal of wage labor*. And we did see flying over the occupied College de France a banner reading "CPE or CDI, it's always STO" (the law used during the Nazi occupation of France for forced labor). In fact what's at stake under the obfuscating term precariousness, is not a simple degradation of classic wage labor, but a true redefinition of what labor is. If working meant for a long time doing what you've been told to do, from now on working means being who you've been told to be. Any intern knows the smiles she has to feign, the managerial pidgin she must swallow, the enthusiastic submission she must display—in short the mask she must put on in order to be accepted by the corporate world. She knows that being integrated into society means being *assimilated by society*, and being integrated into the company means being *assimilated by the company*. Thus the two-year trial period proposed by the CPE is exactly the time needed for one to *become the mask one wears*, to incorporate oneself through mimicking into the figure one is expected to be. Finally, if classic wage labor was almost never criticized by the anti-CPE movement, it's because that critique has already been made, in practice, by capitalism. All that participatory management, all these "enriched tasks," all that individualization of work schedules and working conditions, all that rhetoric of motivation, they *already* are the

response to the crisis of classic labor from the 1970s, when an entire generation was refusing to work en masse. What was being rejected in the CPE was not wage labor, or its crisis, but the redefinition of work that results from this crisis, the element of subjection in contemporary work, which mobilizes us subjectively. The "dismissal without motivation" clause of the CPE simply sanctioned this new regime where one can be fired for what one is—not for what one does; for straying from a norm of conduct—not for violating the work contract. So much so that the chant "CPE no, no, no/CDI yes, yes, yes" expressed less of a servile desire to be exploited eight hours a day like everyone else but a refusal to let work form us, to let it penetrate deeper into being. If work is no longer the basic contractual exchange of a sum of money for an amount of time, but the maniacal conforming of subjectivities which results in a situation where a model who never does anything never actually stops working, then it is a situation where the instrument of the general strike could be placed in a museum. Thus comes the time of the *human strike*, where we begin



by stopping being who we are supposed to be, where we relate to each other beyond the existing identities and codes, where we blow up the entire predictable universe. The time has come when those who don't work are inventing new forms of the strike.

12.

The blockade of universities was not simply a method of disruption, or a way to take possession of a particular space. It was a precondition for other things, a way for the participants in blockades to get organized, to open the door for new situations. Liberated from the hassles of the universities, college and high school students quickly spread their desire for everything to stop. Instead of begging the unions to declare a general strike, they spread the human strike onto the railroad tracks, the highways, into the offices and the shopping centers.

What is true for college buildings is true elsewhere: on a by-pass where thousands of drivers have to stop, and dare finally get out of their vehicles to talk; in a distribution center where blocking the trucks allows for a common discourse to finally emerge, only to be quickly stifled by the intervention on the special anti-terrorist police unit. This entire society makes us think of *Jarry's The Supermale*: it's a corpse whose death cannot be noted until the machine has been stopped. That's why each and every one of the machine's gears rouses the desire to stop everything, that's why its managers will stop at nothing to make it keep turning.

13.

As long as revolutionary organizations and programs existed, the ends alone were of importance. For the revolution all means were good. Now, with the loss of all revolutionary perspective, the social movements are where people congratulate themselves and each other for being together without knowing exactly why. And since the end is missing, the means themselves become vague. People fight the cops a little, they demonstrate a bit in an unpermitted march, they have a good time during the occupation, and when everything is over they return to their studies, to their individual paths with a few new buddies they've made in the process. The movements offer this comfort of not being too engaging: they have a beginning, an apex, and a conclusion. And when the authorities ring the end of recess, they don't have too many scruples about getting back in the ranks: they hadn't strayed too far in the first place. We say that where we experience joy, that's where our destiny lies, that the end is intrinsic to the means, that we must become as attached to the practices that fill us with joy as to ourselves. "And the moment when I was truly myself is positively life, life itself, life complete." In blocking the economy and in destroying the police we glimpsed the spark of a historic life that nothing can make us relinquish, no matter what happens.

14.

In 1970 Hannah Arendt made the following remark about student unrest at the time: "The theoretical sterility of this movement and the heavy monotony of its analyses are even more shocking and sad because its joy in action is such a pleasure to see... What creates the biggest doubts about this movement in both America and Western Europe is the kind of curious desperation that is part of it, as if all the

participants were convinced in advance that their movement will be crushed." One magazine made the following comments on the student movement of 1986: "Everything is happening as if society today has become extremely favorable to street movements, which are exclusively movements 'of expression' as they say: sudden, spectacular, enormous and, most of all, without future." More than any other, student movements seem hindered by this harmful idea of *mobilization*, which contains within it the necessary return to normal. By *mobilizing ourselves*, that is by neglecting to organize ourselves on the basis of our needs—which are not only needs to sleep and eat, but needs to think, love, build, study and rest, needs to be alone or to form a bloc—is to put into brackets all of this, to put into brackets all that attaches us to life, and by neglecting to seize it collectively, we make sure that the moment of exhaustion will come and that each will see in the end of the mobilization a happy reconciliation with abandoned habits, with crucial passions, all pushed back into the private sphere. On the contrary, with the concern to organize on the basis of our needs, we build the party of the insurrection.

15.

In a world of flux the party of the insurrection can only be the party of the blockade, the physical blockade of all circulation of merchandise. But because the world of flux is also the world of total separation, the insurrectionary party has to also be the party of communization, the party of common use and sharing. Sooner or later we will have to blockade the wholesale distribution ports, but we won't be able to do that unless we've resolved the supply question on the local scale, unless we've established the necessary solidarity. If everything was just a question of contesting the CPE, then the sovereign assembly could have passed for an adequate form of organization. But if it's about striking down an entire agonizing world, the basic form of self-organization is the *commune*. The commune is the place where organizing a blockade and organizing a shared life come together. It's the place where we can block everything; we do not depend on the general circulation because we've organized ourselves to block everything. In the course of reclaiming territory it could appear that the contemporary metropolis, structured entirely on flux, is not compatible with any form of self-organization, and that it has to be destroyed piece by piece. The experience of the insurrectionary process in Argentina

in 2001, limited by the extreme dependence, especially for food, of Buenos Aires, makes a good account of this.

16.

Everywhere in France in the wake of the movement crews were formed, houses were squatted, a core was constituted. This was not done by old militants, but by those for whom the struggle was not a means to one end—repealing the CPE—but pure means, a desirable form of life. It's as if the metropolis was forming on the intention to destroy the only accessible community within it. Year after year, from high school student movements to waves of night fires, we see the remains of this society implode while at the same time an ever-growing and richer subgroup of *deserters* expands. The question is how does desertion become conspiracy? How can these crews coalesce into a force? Those who doubt our capacity to intervene in historically decisive ways should first remember how in the most rebellious cities—Rennes, Rouen, Caen, Crenoble, Nantes, Strasbourg, Toulouse—a tiny number of organized subversives was enough to change completely the local texture of the movement.

17.

The lightning-fast disappearance of the movement is easily explained. By refusing to identify the unions, the media, the administration, those opposing the blockades as *enemies*, and by refusing to treat them as such, the movement let them become part of it. It formed general assemblies with them, sometimes booed them, but it never fought against them, pretending to represent a consensus of civil society against the government. It's a question of democracy. So much so that when all these characters suddenly switched sides, a void formed around us: we were nothing more than a handful of unwavering rebels left out in the open.

18.

The almost instant vanishing of the movement after it was announced that the CPE was repealed was met with two typical reflexes: the militant reflex and the activist reflex. On one hand the morticians of the movement were calling for yet another mobilization without believing in it too much, and were desperately trying to recruit some freshly politicized meat through some "collective of converging struggles" or "fighting against repression." This is the same reflex that now guides the different meetings of depressed obedient Trotskyists, anarchists, or autonomists who are trying to give a future to a movement that was doing very well without them when it was alive. On the other hand

we see a whole cadre of action groups who dream of reproducing what they have seen elsewhere.

19.

The movement constantly oscillated between two questions, which at the end gave it its final blow: democracy and the general assembly. While at the beginning of the movement only some fifteen pissed off people were needed to block a lecture hall, a building, or an entire college department building, the votes of 500, 1000, 2000 people supporting continuing the blockade were erased by the sovereign general assembly. It was often precisely here, confronting the absurdity of the game of democracy that the true nature of the confrontation embodied in the question of the blockades was revealed. After the vote, those for and against the blockades *finally* came to blows.

20.

The assembly as a political form comes to us from times when life, and therefore also speech, was still charged with community. Worker or peasant community, military or popular, Athenian or soviet. There has always been something theatrical and gregarious, stakes to claim, control, and hegemony in the assemblies. Today it's all that's left. That's why they are henhouses. That's why in the places where a large enough community of struggle was born, the assemblies had no relationship with what was going on in the streets. The assembly, inadequate for free thought just as it is for organizing actions, is an empty form, a simulacrum good for everything—and nothing. In the process of the movement, comrades faced with that evidence called on people to desert the assembly and to form crews. They opposed assembly with community. This is a mistake. One cannot declare a community; community occurs spontaneously, just like a crew forms without a prearranged decision. If empty words resound in the general assemblies, it is not because of sophistry, tribunes, and bureaucrats—it is because of that which makes sophistry, tribunes, and bureaucrats possible: the absence of any form of community among human beings.

21.

We said we would be back. We were. A banner was flying on the briefly re-occupied

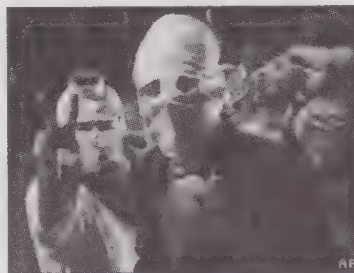
Sorbonne: "The movements are here to die! Long live insurrection!"

22.

Friday, March 31st. Senile pronouncement of president Chirac. Spontaneous gatherings occur in many locations in Paris. Those who are looking for each other find each other, converge on the Elysee, take indirect routes to avoid the mobile units of the National Guard. 3000 people roam the streets from 8 pm to 4 am. A wild roving of over 15 miles, a crowd of all ages, all tendencies, perfectly unarmed, and at a loss to do anything with its own power. A crowd arrives at the doors of the National Assembly before the cops, and would have broken in if it had had just one crowbar. A crowd that almost pushes through the doors of the Senate, passes by the Palace of Justice. It goes up to Barbès and smashes all the banks, the temporary employment agencies, and the hip bars on Boulevard Sebastopol and Boulevard Magenta, in the famous "civilized space" on Magenta, all with the powerful cry "Paris, wake up, get up!" Then, after it salutes the hookers on Pigalle and climbs up towards the

Sacre-Coeur, "Long live the Commune!" can be heard in the street before it could be read on the wretched building, while the crowd, yet again, fails to break in and set it on fire. A fire of joy then burns outside the Sacre-Coeur. One last MacDonalds is shattered. And on the way to the of-

fice of Pierre Leleu (Right wing deputy), which will soon be turned to dust, there is this lady in her fifties, leaning on her balcony, screaming with all her strength "The bad times will end." It's 3 o'clock in the morning. That night, as in some melancholy synopsis, we navigated by everything that, as a start, we will have to burn down.



¹ Some idiots, from the UNEF (main leftist student union) and elsewhere, who cannot stand the fact that we are right dared to protest our signature: who do we represent? and first of all, were we elected by the regular assembly? Must we explain to these retards that an occupation committee is a logistical instance of an occupation — these are the people who get the food, the supplies, stand guard, clean the bathrooms, etc. — and that such a committee "in exile," since the Sorbonne was occupied by the military, was a joke, a contradiction in terms, a little like a subtle Marxist.

Prisons Disallow AJODA

•Images of nudity, including baby pictures, are not allowed in certain prisons. This includes the reproduction of the expulsion from eden by Italian Renaissance artist Masaccio (page 43 in issue 61), which kept one prisoner from receiving that issue.

•Another prisoner didn't get his copy because prisoners can't get "Material that threatens or is detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of the facility. Material that facilitates criminal activity is prohibited."

The mind reels.



Independent journalist Josh Wolf, jailed recently in San Francisco for refusing to provide video footage to a federal grand jury, is the latest in a rash of activists indicted by grand juries. US District Court Judge William Alsup denied Wolf's First, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Amendment arguments, found him in civil contempt, and ordered him immediately jailed. Wolf, 24, was taken to the Dublin Federal Detention Center, and could remain there until July 2007, the duration of the grand jury.

Activists and lawyers supporting Wolf contend that this grand jury is an attempt to avoid



Richard Mock, R.I.P.

Celebrated artist Richard Mock, long time *Anarchy* friend and contributor, has died.

An obituary will be in our next issue. We will miss him.

Increasingly Creative Use of Grand Juries Against Dissidents

California's strict Reporter Shield Law, which protects journalists' files and notes. Kris Hermes of the Grand Jury Resistance Project (GJRP) says "the federal government absurdly asserts that this incident [a protest videotaped by Wolf] rises to the level of a federal crime because SFPD receives federal funds." Although similar shield laws exist in a majority of states, no federal shield law exists to protect reporters.

Information compiled by the GJRP, a coalition that provides education on politically motivated attacks by government, and support to people targeted by these attacks, shows that grand juries are currently being used against environmental and animal rights activists, as well as groups that have historically struggled for

self-determination. The GJRP reports that in the past year, at least 66 individuals have been subpoenaed and/or indicted in Atlanta, Denver, Eugene, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Diego, Tampa, FL, and Trenton, NJ. At least fourteen people have refused to testify, and some were jailed for contempt. In an affidavit filed in connection with the indictment of three environmental activists in Auburn, CA, the FBI irrelevantly referenced anarchists and anarchism 26 times. GJRP believes that the grand jury to which Josh Wolf has been subpoenaed is part of the same broad and unconstitutional federal investigation into anarchist and antiwar activity and other political movements that oppose US policies.

Stop Torture, Smash the State

Review by Leona Benten

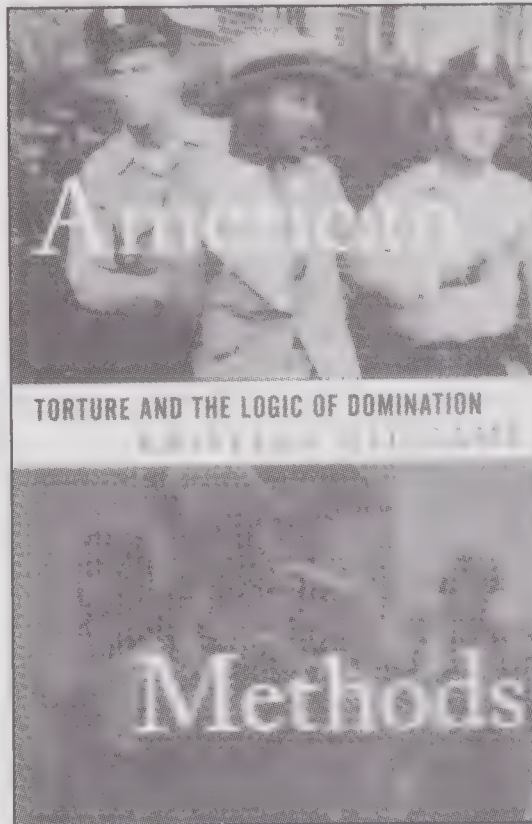
***American Methods:
torture and the logic of domination***

Kristian Williams
(South End Press 2006)
279 pages, paper, \$18

Torture is topical these days. Stories of Abu Ghraib have sparked renewed public interest in the horrible things that normal people are capable of. Tales of torture are always useful for demonstrating the distance between the illusion and the reality of the US and *American Methods* is one of a number of books that draw connections between the most blatant of abuses and some of the system's less obvious problems.

The book starts out with stories from and about Abu Ghraib, moves to a discussion of the ethics of torture and whether torture is ever justifiable, goes on to US-encouraged torture in countries around the world, and then to torture in US prisons and the impact of increasing prison-military overlap. There's a description of commonly-used weapons and tactics, thoughts on rape as a significant model, and finally some broad ideas about what should be done about torture.

This book is not offensive to anarchist sensibilities. The juxtaposition of domestic and international abuse is appropriate, and the brief mention of rape outside of institutions, rape as a daily reality for women, is not out of place in a book with the subtitle *torture and the logic of domination*. If anything, more information about the connection between institutional torture and private violence could have been included. The thread of the book that is most relevant to an anarchist audience is the analysis of how people in the military or prison industry are encouraged to do things that under normal circumstances they wouldn't



do. The new documentary "The Human Behavior Experiments" (based on old experiments at Yale and Stanford) as well as conversations in our circles about the collaborators of Operation Backfire also draw attention to the ongoing question of how people come to do things that in their normal state they would be horrified by. The reason that this is an interesting conversation for anarchists is not for the purposes of prison or military reform, but to understand how we influence and are influenced by similar dynamics either within our own milieu, or when we are forced to deal with others. If we accept that under specific circumstances we are all are capable of betraying our friends, or of becoming torturers, then what kinds of more useful conversations do we have? Put another way, what is

it about how people are in the world that makes Operation Backfire-type collaboration as common as it is? *American Methods* does not take this question of capacity out of the context of the military and prisons, but the lessons Williams draws from those institutions can be generalized.

For his activist and/or liberal audience, Williams encourages fights for stronger rules against torture, the argument being that even though those rules will be broken, they are important to provide clarity, so that when those boundaries are crossed, there is no question that something has happened and that there will be consequences. He makes a somewhat compelling argument for this, including the point that when rules are not strong, then not only is it easier for people to get wrapped up in the tension of the moment and do things that they are not supposed to do, but it's also easier for their supervisors to shrug off the behavior and make excuses for it.

However, the anarchist response to this is obvious: (to paraphrase Einstein) we cannot simultaneously prepare for and prevent torture. The anarchist project must be to eradicate prisons and interrogation entirely.

On one hand this book is a fairly predictable litany of abuse and horror committed by US military forces: awful but not surprising. There were certainly things I had not heard of before—for example *extraordinary rendition*, shipping someone out of the country they're in to a country that is willing to torture them at the request of the US; a process that was started under Clinton. *Black sites* are US-controlled areas in other countries that are outside of any oversight (whatever that oversight is ever worth); these have started since 9/11. *Ghost detainees* are people who are held without record or official acknowledgement, who can be—and have been—killed with impunity; another term for disappeared.

On the other hand this book is an anarchist-friendly attempt to guide a self-selecting population (people who would pick up a book on US-sponsored torture) to an understanding that these abuses are an inherent part of state power, and, as Wil-

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A Blast from the Past

Review by Aragorn!

The Blast

ed. Alexander Berkman
(AK Press 2006)
242 pages, paper, \$21.95

If AK Press has a reason for existing beyond producing self serving logo-ed merchandise and spoken word CDs by Noam Chomsky it is publishing a book like this. They have done anarchists a great service with the publication of this full set of facsimile prints of *The Blast*, an anarchist newspaper from San Francisco edited by Alexander Berkman. As selective and sectarian as AK's choices of reprints usually are, they cannot be criticized for this one. Also, Barry Pateman's introduction stands out as a very clear description of a large body of source material that can seem overwhelming due to its formality and 19th century style.

The Blast came out of a period of real social unrest. Shortly preceding the initial publication of *The Blast* were several high profile anarchist-implicated bombings resulting in death, arrest, court cases, and support work by Berkman. The overwhelming sense in the artwork and articles in *The Blast* is the conflict between classes that Berkman believed was destined to flower into a social revolu-

tion and anarchist communist society.

Personalities like Berkman are hard to find in the current anarchist milieu, which seems soft by comparison. After attempting to kill Andrew Carnegie's henchman (and capitalist big name in his own right) Henry Clay Frick, Berkman spent 14 years in prison. Upon his release he immediately

his deportation): insurrection, class conflict, and reprisal. After leaving New York, nine years later, and speaking throughout the country, he passed through Los Angeles where he organized the solidarity committee to defend David Caplan and Marthew Schmidt from the charge of bombing the *Los Angeles Times* building. He ended up in San Francisco and began publishing *The Blast*. As the first issue of *The Blast* stated

To destroy the Old and the False is the most vital work. We emphasize it: to blast the bulwarks of slavery and oppression is of primal necessity. It is the beginning of really lasting construction.

Thus will *The Blast* be destructive. And *The Blast* will be constructive.

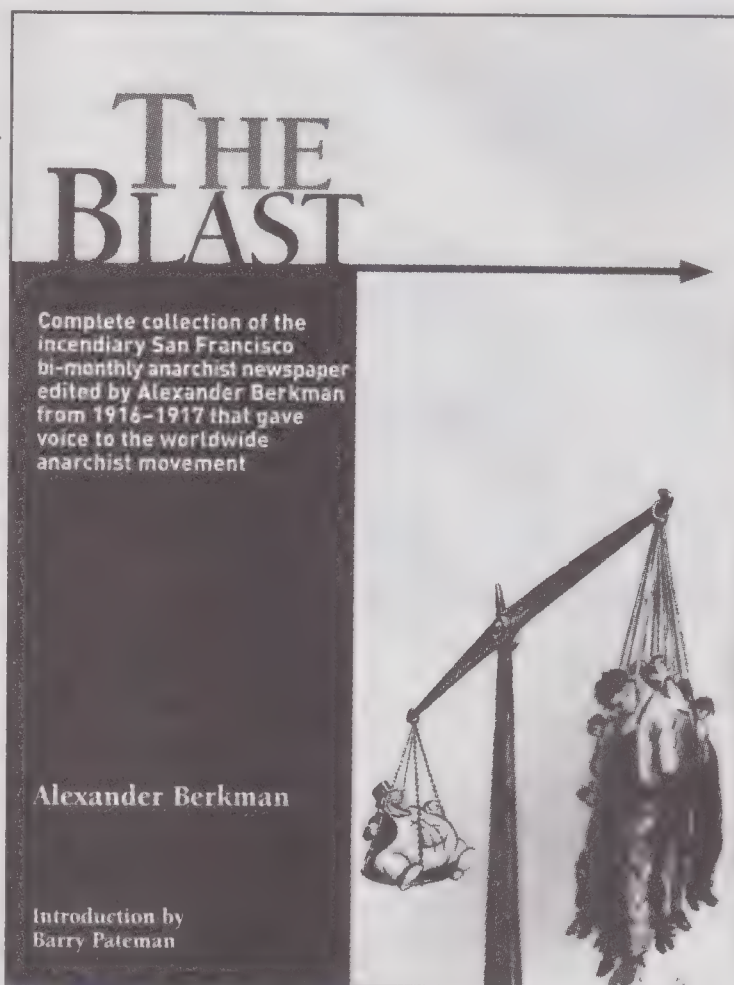
The Blast lasted for two years and twenty nine issues. During this time the San Francisco Preparedness Day bombing happened. Preparedness Day was a day with a parade on July 22, 1916 that anticipated American participation in WWI. A suitcase bomb (ignited near the Ferry Building on Market Street) killed 10 and wounded 40.

The Blast's wry response to the subsequent kicking down of their doors exemplifies the tone of the magazine.

At last! A squad of detectives of the newly created bomb bureau came down upon the office of *The Blast*. A raid, b'gosh!

It happened a whole week after the bomb explosion. Why did they give us so much time to "prepare"? "For ways and tricks peculiar, etc." Stupidity alone does not exhaust the explanation. Of course the police knew that we had nothing to do with the explosion. Cool and gentle as we are, we never explode.

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dove back into the fray, as writer and editor for Emma Goldman's *Mother Earth* magazine. He appears to have left *ME* for a combination of the usual reasons—politics and drama. Emma was less inclined towards the activities that inspired Berkman (and that continued to inspire him until the time of

From Monarchist Leftists to Filled-From-the-Flow*

Social Critique and the Anarcho-Travelogue

Clandestines: The Pirate Journals of an Irish Exile

Ramor Ryan
(AK Press, 2006)
279 pages, paper, \$15.95

Suffled How It Gush: A North American Anarchist in the Balkans

Shon Meckfessel
(Eberhardt Press, 2006)
235 pages, paper, \$12.00

From Bakunin's adventures across the revolutionary terrain of Europe in 1848 and beyond to the summit-hopping activists and insurrectionaries of today, travel has played an important role in the long and tangled history of anarchism. Whether making their way from uprising to uprising, living expatriate lives abroad, compelled by the authorities at home, or simply visiting far-flung comrades in distant lands, anarchists and revolutionaries of all stripes and in all eras have felt the urge to wander. The journeys in exile of such illustrious comrades as Emma Goldman, Buenaventura Durruti, and Errico Malatesta have become legend, inspiring many a radical to see the world for themselves. Now, two new and very different books add to this storied tradition of the anarchist travelogue.

The most surprising aspect of Ramor Ryan's *Clandestines* is its publisher; one might expect that the travel stories of a globetrotting activist would find a home with CrimethInc., not AK Press. Indeed, stylistically *Clandestines* reads much like an international and explicitly political *Evasion*, with street fighting substituted for shoplifting, *zapatistas* and the *autonomes* of Berlin for thieves and scam artists. Much like that oft-vilified volume of travel crime, Ryan's book benefits from its readability—which sometimes helps the reader to overlook the

author's general lack of critical thinking towards his subjects. For while Ryan refers to himself as an anarchist, his politics might better be described as "left activist" in nature: his sympathy for any project, resistance movement, or even regime that frames itself in the terms of "the progressive left" or "anti-imperialism" places him firmly outside of the realm of genuine anti-state politics.

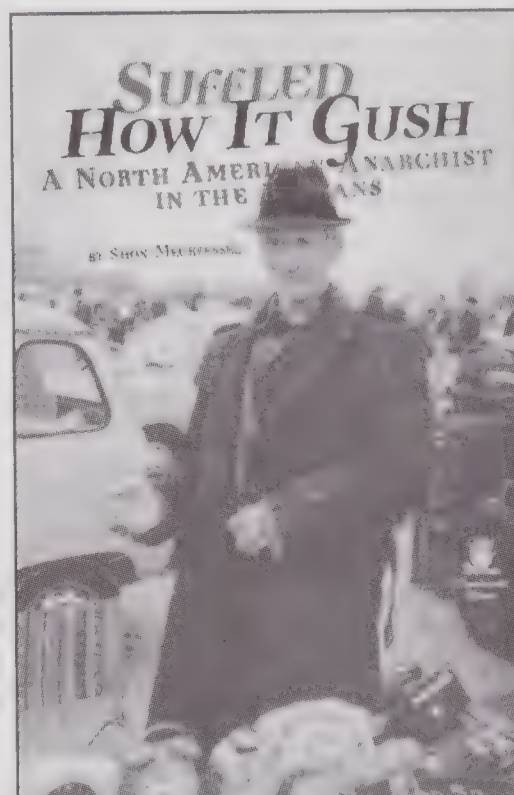
While Ryan is not immune to the allure of the authoritarian left, at least a few of his more cringeworthy moments are redeemed through last-minute insight. Upon meeting a Central Committee member of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), he swoons like a Guevara devotee in the presence of the guerrilla commander:

An engaging smile lightens his charismatic face as he offers each of us his hand. We are all humbled before him and almost bow in return. There is a touch of magic in the air. A genuine Kurdish Prince! (72)

But as this "Kurdish Prince" speaks about his party's struggle, Ryan interjects his own commentary about the obvious shortcomings of their strategy and analysis. By the end of their talk, he thinks to himself, "Maybe he is just some pumped-up warlord after all." (73) Sadly, these moments become fewer and fewer as the book progresses, leaving the reader no doubt as to where Ryan's sympathies generally lie.

The most glaringly awful moments in these memoirs appear in his chapters on Nicaragua and Cuba. Ryan is awestruck by the Sandinistas and their "new kind of revolutionary struggle...driven by a desire

Review by xYosefx



for genuine national self-determination and people's democracy." (153) One might expect this language from a member of one of the solidarity brigades that visited Nicaragua during the early '80s, but coming from the pen of a self-proclaimed anarchist describing his visit there in 1989 and 1990—after a decade of Sandinista political hegemony—such sentiment is unforgivable. Any failings of the Sandinistas' revolution are attributed by Ryan to the Contras. But while those US-backed death squads and paramilitaries certainly did their best to destabilize the new Nicaraguan regime, to

*a possible translation for "suffled how it gush"

ignore the Sandinistas' statist, authoritarian nature is to fall into one of the more obvious pitfalls of the anti-imperialist worldview. When Ryan speaks to a Cuban exile in Mexico about the Caribbean island nation and its President-For-Life, such a worldview becomes even more evident:

"Cuba is a prison; Fidel is a dictator..." "Is he?" My sympathy towards him cools again. I've always admired Cuban resistance to gringo Imperialism. (180)

In the author's mind, resistance to imperialism apparently equals support for the regimes of Fidel Castro and the Sandinistas, as well as for the many Marxist-Leninist guerrilla groupings that were active in the '80s, when Ryan did most of his traveling. It is this inability to see beyond the clichéd

his book appears to lack any form of editing whatsoever: Words are repeatedly misspelled, punctuation is inaccurate or missing altogether, and common grammatical errors go unchecked. In some cases, stories are told twice—in their entirety—in different sections of the book. One might imagine that after the first draft of the manuscript was turned in, it was rushed immediately to the printers without a second glance.

Where *Clandestines* suffers from poor politics and worse editing, Shon Meckfessel's enjoyable travelogue *Suffled How It Gush* benefits from the work of its publisher, Eberhardt Press. *Suffled*, the first full-length book put out by this new anarchist publishing house, is both well-written and well-designed, featuring color covers inside and out and a fold-out map of the Balkans in the back for reference.

Suffled is easily as entertaining as *Clandestines*, but with far more critical politics. By the second page of the foreword, Meckfessel has already criticized leftist stalwart Michael Parenti for willfully turning a blind eye toward Serbian atrocities in the former Yugoslavia. He berates Parenti in the accompanying endnote for his "consistent refusal to implicate [Serbian President Slobodan] Milosevic, as some kind of Great Defender of Socialism, in any of the unfolding of the conflict." (218) Unlike Ramor Ryan, Shon Meckfessel is no advocate for heads of state or their defenders on the authoritarian left. In traveling the Balkan region, he is searching for his own answers, refusing to accept the ready-made ones of governments, the mass media, or anti-imperialists like Parenti. Rather than spending his time with politicians or partisan guerrillas, he tries to find a subjective truth among the everyday people he encounters in his travels and the anarchist comrades whose hospitality he enjoys.

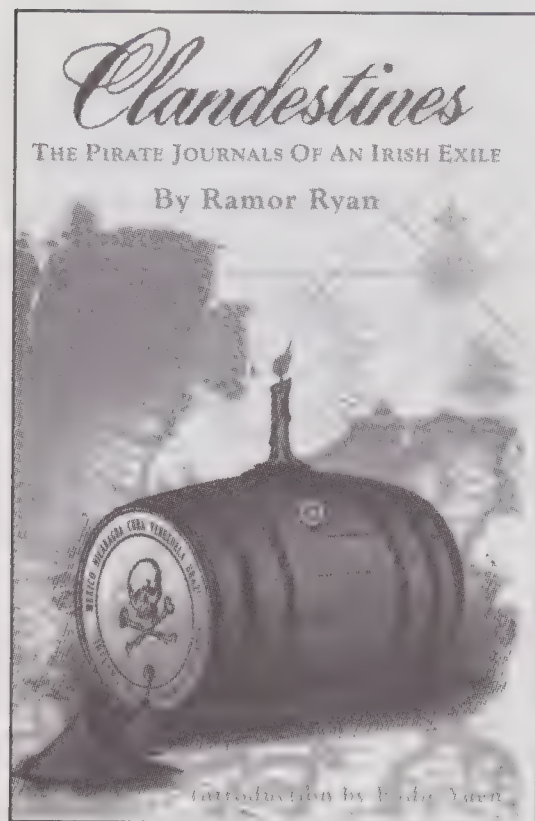
Suffled contains everything one would want in an anarchist travelogue: in-depth history, entertaining anecdotes, memorable characters, and solid sociopolitical analysis. As Meckfessel travels throughout the various Balkan states (on several trips, over a number of years), the reader gets a strong feel for the entire Balkan region, its peoples and cultures, its governments, and its native anarchists. The convoluted, near-Byzantine interrelations

between overlapping ethnic and religious groups, as well as the historical, political, and economic reasons behind years of warfare and enmity, are laid out in an easy-to-grasp way for those who may be only marginally familiar with the Balkans. How many casual readers know, for instance, that prior to Bosnia's partition into ethnic enclaves by US diplomats, one-third of marriages there had been across ethnic lines? Throughout the text, the lie is repeatedly put to the common assertion that the Balkan conflicts are the natural product of "ancient ethnic hatreds," and to the idea that they can be ended through state-building. Meckfessel (unlike many other self-proclaimed anarchist writers) clearly articulates the absurdity of national liberation:

When national liberation is the only realistic means to freedom, when universal compulsory mass murder is the only realistic means of self-determination, what do you do with reality? When poverty and servitude are the basis of rational economic order, how can a reasonable person be rational?(xv)

After a decade of internecine warfare, many citizens of the now-separate republics still consider their ethnic identity to be "Yugoslav." Croat neo-Nazis extol the virtues of the Serb people—the same Serbs whose paramilitary squads killed one of their best friends a few years before. The government of Albania fights to keep Kosova from merging with their state, for the ethnic Albanians there are of the Gheg minority, and their incorporation into the Albanian nation may threaten the hegemony of the Tosks. The more one reads, the more the media picture of the Balkans as a region of never-ending ethnic warfare seems out of sync with the lives of the people to whom the author introduces us. An anarchist from the Croatian capital Zagreb exclaims that her friends all have mixed roots: "...Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian, Hungarian, Italian... We are all mixed here." She pauses. "We are all Borg!" (30)

Klonko, the anarchist architectural student sitting next to her, states, "There are people with clear origins, but we don't



dichotomies of left and right that make his outlook so unappealing.

But as noxious as his politics may be to many of the readers of this publication, Ryan's prose is usually entertaining and clear. It is therefore all the more unfortunate that

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Blaming It All On The Desert

SAHARASIA: The Four Thousand BCE Origins of Child Abuse, Sex-Repression, Warfare and Social Violence in the Deserts of the Old World

James DeMeo
(Orgone Biophysical Research Lab, 1998)
454 pages, paper, \$35.00

Review by Harold Barclay

James DeMeo is a professional geographer and devotee of Wilhelm Reich. He is also founder and director of the Orgone Biophysical Research Laboratory, near Ashland, Oregon. DeMeo seeks to convince us that the cause of the innumerable abuses in human society can all be traced back to Old World *patrist* desert people, a *patrist* society being patrilineal, patriarchal, authoritarian, hierarchical, militarist, even sadistic, among other things. Commencing with major desiccations which began about 4000 BCE, these people invaded and overcame *matrist* peoples who in contrast were matrilineal, spontaneous, indulgent, egalitarian, democratic, and non-violent. The permissive and benign way of life was destroyed in favor of an ugly armored *patrist* one under which we suffer today. This view is based upon Reich's thesis of the armoring of the human personality. That is, the individual adopts a bodily armor in reaction to early childhood abuses and oppression, especially as these relate to sexual behavior, and all of which derive from the *patrist* cultural context. DeMeo is inspired by Reich's claim that in the desert, animals and plants acquire armoring to protect themselves from the hostile arid and hot environment. But for animals Reich can only refer to that armoring as it applies to desert reptiles and insects.

There are many problems with drawing any analogy between human body armor, (manifestations of emotional states in a body), and the physical adaptations of some

desert creatures. First, all insects are armored whether they live in deserts or not. Second, except for the armadillo, mammals and birds

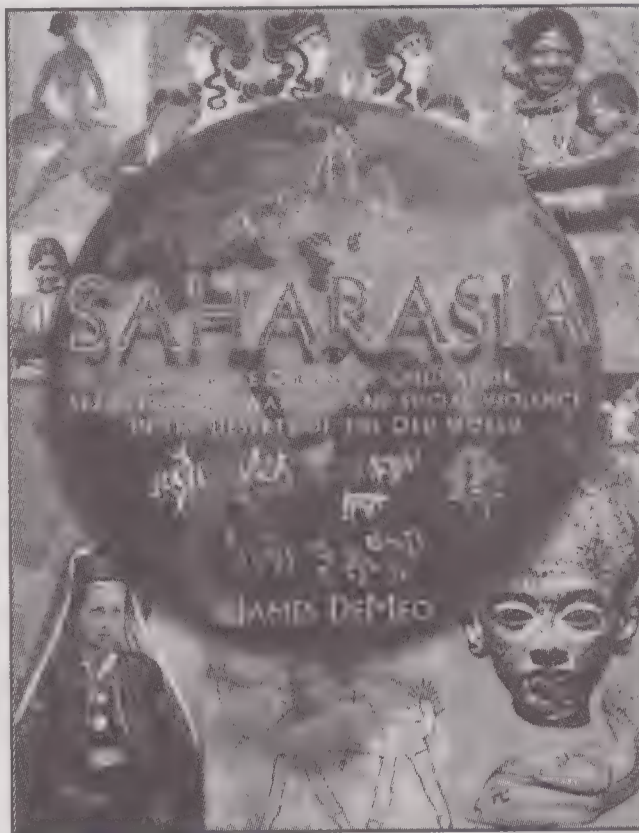
DeMeo at one point calls the Old World hot deserts the most hostile earthly climates. I wonder if he has experienced winter in the Arctic? For thirty years I lived in Edmonton, Alberta, and I came to call the five-month-long winters there the fascist season because one could never venture outdoors without armoring oneself with sweater, overcoat, gloves, boots, earmuffs, and hat. A question arises then as to why the Inuit, the Chuckchi, Samoyeds and other far northern people are not armored and aggressive as is alleged of the desert people to the south.

DeMayo's Saharasia proposal seems yet another example of geographical determinism, along the lines of Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs and Steel*.

Geographical determinism is an overly simplistic and pretty indefensible notion. We may say that geography sets limits to behavior, but humans invent innumerable devices to alter that environment in order to cope. The data of anthropology is replete with evidence in which human culture defies geography. We know very well today that humans do a good job

at altering and determining the geography rather than vice versa.

DeMeo, in true Manichaean fashion, classifies societies as either good or bad: that is, armored *patrist*—i.e., bearers of all that is bad with the human world—and unarmored *matrist*—bearers of all good. He shows a World Behavior Map, based on data drawn from George Murdock's *Ethnographic Atlas from 1840-1960*, in which he characterizes the arid regions of the Old World as "extreme *patrist* armored culture" while most of the



of the desert are not armored unless one counts the evolution of various water conservation devices amongst camels, kangaroo rats, etc. as examples of armoring. Third, reptilian armor apparently has no effect on their behavior, sexual or otherwise, contrary to Reich's notion of human armoring. Fourth, both Reich and DeMeo overlook the nature of Arctic, Sub Arctic, and Antarctic climates in relation to this question. That is, areas in these regions are deserts, but cold deserts.

rest of Africa and Asia is classed by DeMeo as "intermediate, moderate" and nearly all of the Western hemisphere and Oceania are "extreme matrilineal unarmored culture." It should be carefully noted that the map is the result of a straining process through a number of sieves: The basic data is an enormous number of stenographic reports, which Murdock and his colleagues read, creating a summary interpretation of the material. Then, DeMeo reads Murdock's skeletonized versions and further summarizes results that he finds compatible with his thesis. In this process the richness and variety are lost. Problems are especially exacerbated in later maps where he classifies what are presumably specific societies on a 1-10 matrilineal-patrilineal scale then provides only the classification, so that one could not check on the accuracy of his interpretations because no group is named. Only numbers appear across the face of any particular continent.

DeMeo's classifications make the maps useless. First, it appears that he is confused about the nature of kinship systems. He seems to recognize only three types of kinship: matrilineal, patrilineal, and cognitive. He has classed Northern Eurasia, most of the Americas, and Australia as *extreme* matrilineal, meaning they would have, among other things, a matrilineal, matrilineal system, yet he has included the duolineal, patrilineal arrangement of most of Australia and the bilateral situation of Northern Eurasia and much of North America in this category. If there are any extreme matrilineal societies among the Indians of North America it is among the Iroquois of the Northeast, several peoples in the Southeast United States, and some in the Southwest. Also, some of the Northwest Coast people are matrilineal, but he has them as *intermediate, moderate*. Is he not aware that aside from the three systems he considers, there are bilaterality and duolineal descent, that residence arrangements vary in these systems from neolocal to patrilineal and temporary matrilineal or uxori-patrilineal? In Africa there are several people on the West Coast who are matrilineal, and there is also the so called matrilineal belt of South Central Africa both of which he classifies as *intermediate, moderate*. Ethiopia he lists as *extreme patrilineal armored*, but the kinship system of the

largest ethnic group, the Amhara, is cognitive. Further, the wide variation within all of these systems is not taken into account.

Indeed, the considerable variation within all the expressions of behavior, reduced by DeMeo into two types of society, is a general situation which he ignores. In his geographical determinism, DeMeo overlooks the role of property and will to power in human history. He overlooks the fact that the state originated in river bank agricultural areas, not in the desert. There is no mention anywhere of the place of government and the state except to say that the character of the family determines the character of the government, which is *not* so: Nuer and Dinka, for example, have no government yet are patrilineal, patrilineal and engage in various other patrilineal behaviors.

In his geographical determinism, DeMeo overlooks the role of property and will to power in human history.

Even the traditional Arab Bedouin and Somalis are stateless, but have patriarchal family arrangements and body mutilation.

In describing the character of patrilineal and matrilineal societies, several features are extremely vague. What is "less" or "more" indulgent, how much physical affection is more or less? How do we know "more freedom" as against "limits to freedom"? Indeed, I have never heard of a society that didn't have some limits to freedom. Later in the book we find that other characteristics of patrilineal include a "high narcissism index, high oral anxiety potential, low anal satisfaction potentiality, low average satisfaction potential, low speed of attention to infant needs, high bellicosity," etc. How are all these measured and what are they? Indeed, there are so many characteristics for extreme patrilineal and extreme matrilineal, all of which apparently are to be given equal weight and most of which are vague and therefore meaningless, how is it possible to say a society is *intermediate, moderate* or simply patrilineal or matrilineal?

Even if we grant that desert societies are patrilineal, we are faced with the diffusion of such patrilineal practices into matrilineal societies so as to completely overwhelm and destroy them. The great fourteenth century Arab sociologist, Ibn Khaldun, developed a theory of cycles, in which acephalous Arab pastoralists, characterized especially by social solidarity,

conquered established cities, adopted city ways, and consequently grew degenerate and soft. They were then overcome by a new wave of desert folk who in turn adopted (patrilineal and degenerate) city ways. The most significant point here for this discussion is that Ibn Khaldun argues the opposite of DeMeo, namely the desert Arab pastoralists adopted the degenerate urban (patrilineal?) ways. Similarly the Mongols invaded China and adopted Chinese (patrilineal) civilization, the Chinese did not become Mongols. Along the borders of the old Chinese empire we find numerous pastoral (patrilineal) people who adopted the ways of the state from the Chinese.

There are many cases of pastoral acephalous peoples adopting the ways of civilization, yet according to DeMeo it should be the other way round. In attempting to support his view regarding Australia and the Americas DeMeo has little to say other than this or that

could have happened. Finally, on this matter, one wonders why a matrilineal society would so abandon all its characteristics absolutely and then proceed to elaborate upon the patrilineal practices to an extent far beyond that of any originally patrilineal society (Note Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia, etc.).

When it comes to demonstrating empirically his thesis that desert peoples imposed their ways upon matrilineal peoples, the evidence is practically nonexistent. He argues that desertification became especially pronounced after 4000 BCE (which is true) and that this provoked major movements of people out of the desert to invade the sedentary matrilineal peoples of more moist areas and impose their patrilineal notions. It is true that a somewhat controversial theory holds that ancient Egypt acquired much of its culture from incoming populations from the Western and Eastern Deserts after 4000 BCE, but we do not know if this movement was of any major significance, nor do we have any reason to believe that all that these newcomers might have introduced was particularly patrilineal or that the sedentary Egyptians were not already quite patrilineal on their own. For China, DeMeo holds that the Shang were a desert people who invaded China and imposed patrilineal. At the same time K.C. Chang, a prominent Sinologist and archaeologist, claims the Shang had

roots in Shāndong province on the northeast coast. Elsewhere I have already discussed Gimbutas' theory that matricentric Europeans were overwhelmed by Indo-European patriarchal pastoralists, pointing out the shortcomings of that view.¹

For any evidence that the non-desert world, at least, was matrlist before 4000 BCE, DeMeo depends almost exclusively on the widespread occurrence of goddess statuary.

The reasoning is that since these statues sometimes look like pregnant women, they must be fertility goddesses and this suggests to him that the societies that made and used them must have been matrlist or matricentered. This is unacceptable. Goddesses are found amongst distinctly patriarchal groups. In addition, both Berber and Arab societies, for example, have patrilineal clans, some of which claim women as founders; women have sometimes even ruled patriarchal states (e.g., Boudicca among the Britons, Hatshepsut and Cleopatra among ancient Egyptians). Lynn Roller, professor of Classics at the UC Davis, writes in *In Search of God the Mother*:

In reality, figurine groups from prehistoric Mediterranean sites offer little support for the hypothesis of a mother goddess cult... the total assemblage of prehistoric female figurines represents a normal range of female appearances... the great variation in their appearance and in the contexts in which they were found indicates that they served a variety of functions, not all religious. Those from Neolithic sites in the eastern Mediterranean... were found in household deposits, in rubbish dumps, or in graves. Interpretations as servant figures (in Egypt), teaching devices, toys, or objects of sympathetic magic appear much more plausible. (14-15)

As further evidence for early matrism, DeMeo says archaeological data shows an absence of such things as kingship, patriarchy, various forms of mutilation and child abuse, etc. However, the absence of archaeological evidence does not mean absence in fact and we have much evidence of societies without rulers, but which engage in various patristic activities.²

DeMeo makes such statements as (k)ingship, male gods, the despotic

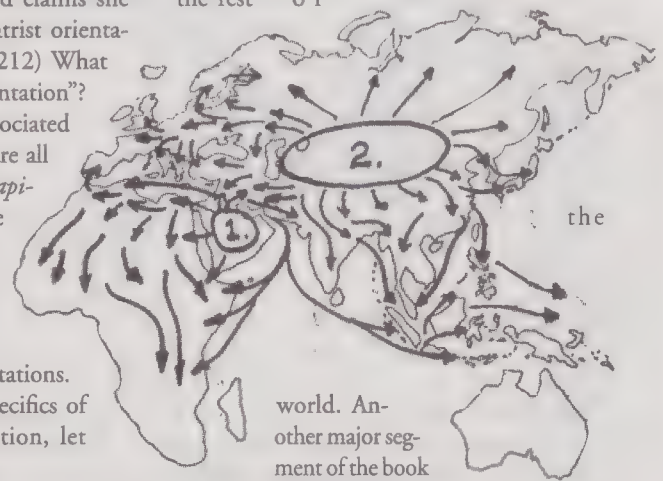
central state, patrilineage, slavery, polygamy, concubinage, female seclusion, the harem and veil, ritual widow murder, infant cranial deformation and swaddling all appeared in Central Asia or in the territories conquered by Central Asian nomads after, and only after this period (after 4000 BCE). (326)

Such sweeping statements demand substantiation, but there is only his say so. Further, there are such statements as "some regions do indicate remnants of a lingering matrilineal kinship and inheritance..." (264). What specific lingering remnants might these be? Or again, he refers to Helen Fisher's *The Sex Contract*, and claims she demonstrates a "distinctly matrlist orientation" for "early hominoids" (212) What is this "distinctly matrlist orientation"? Apparently, it is something associated with "early hominoids" who are all different species than *Homo sapiens*. In any case, I do not believe that Helen Fisher is the person to consult on early Hominoids. One needs to look to paleoanthropologists and they do not mention any such orientations. Indeed, no one knows the specifics of early human social organization, let alone of the early Hominoids.

This leads to another issue regarding this book and that is the nature of DeMeo's sources and his use of them. His bibliography is an unusual assortment of more recent publications along with those that have long since been superceded. One reference upon which he relies concerning language affiliations is one hundred years old, and modern linguistics has long since surpassed it. He often relies on a writer who is in no sense a specialist in the field he is investigating when there is ample recent material from far more qualified people. (e.g., J. Jaynes, *The Origins of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*, a most questionable source for anything, is a source for ancient Assyria). His scholarship is often sloppy. Thus, he says that before 4000 BCE Mesopotamia was relatively peaceful, and uses as a reference Tannahill, who actually says 3000 BCE. On page 119, DeMeo says "Circumcision was fully adopted by the Hebrews only after their exodus from Egypt," using Joshua 5:3-9 as the source. But that source says that Joshua

was to "circumcise the people of Israel again the second time.... Though all the people who came out had been circumcised, yet all the people that were born on the way in the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt had not been circumcised."

For an argument which claims that patrism replaced matrism shortly after 4000 BCE DeMeo devotes very little space to actually demonstrating this and this is to be expected since there is a clear paucity of data supporting such a view. Rather, he reviews more or less known history concentrating especially on movements of desert peoples in more recent times, long after such people were required to impose their patrism in the rest of



world. Another major segment of the book deals with the history of the increasing desiccation of the earth and climatic change, areas where there is firm empirical evidence and where DeMeo, as a geographer, would be at home.

A few other points. A map (p. 118) allegedly shows the age of boys at circumcision for the Old World. For much of North Africa he lists the age as within the first two month. This is incorrect. For example, in both Egypt and northern Sudan circumcision occurs between ages two and eight years. DeMeo apparently made a short visit to Egypt and makes a number of observations in an appendix, with unclear relevance to the precise subject of the book. In any case for one who knows Egypt many of his remarks are misleading. The Islamic Middle East DeMeo classes as extreme patrlist and, therefore, as areas where breast feeding would be restricted and child training very severe. This is clearly erroneous. Women freely give their breasts to nursing infants and in very public places and without any qualms. Boys especially are allowed great freedom until

age seven, it being considered that they lack any intellectual capacity for learning until that age. During toilet training infants walk about the village naked from the waist down.

DeMeo includes caste organization as a characteristic of patrist society, but he never defines it and from what he writes he clearly does not use the word as sociologists or anthropolo-

become widely accepted.

I would like to offer in a very brief fashion another scenario of human social evolution as an alternative. And it is one which is certainly not new or original with me. Before 12,000 years ago, humans were all foragers—that is,

DeMeo raises interesting questions as to where and how all these repressive and abusive human practices come from. But definitive judgments on these issues will likely never be forthcoming.



gists would. Many of the societies he describes as caste ridden have no castes. He also considers worship of a "high god" as patrist. The point here is that there are innumerable societies which have a high god in addition to a multiplicity of other divine beings. They are not, as he implies, monotheistic. His views on the nature of homosexuality would raise a few objections, I am sure, in gay circles. There are various other errors throughout the text.

The question arises: does this book have any redeeming features? DeMeo has engaged in an arduous task, covering an extremely large amount of data. He raises interesting questions as to where and how all these repressive and abusive human practices come from. But definitive judgments on these issues will likely never be forthcoming. We are especially hampered by the lack of empirical data. Like so many before him who have attempted to explain world history by grand theory, DeMeo's effort is doomed to fail.

Reich's armoring hypothesis is interesting, provocative, and quite reasonable. As DeMeo points out, Reich's views on sexual behavior and suggestions for reform, presented in the earlier period, have now

hunter-gatherers. In such a system there was little property or hierarchy. The economy was one based upon reciprocity and the sharing of food. The social order has been called egalitarian, but that egalitarianism is actually the equality of adult males, although women also had far more influence than is characteristic of most later societies and children a much freer life. Kinship was primarily of the bilateral type. No one can say when matriliney or patriliney first appeared, but women were the seed gatherers and so most likely the ones knowledgeable in their significance. Thus, it is fair to guess that they were the first gardeners, leading to the importance of land as property, which more often would be inherited from mother to daughter. So we have matrilineal descent, which should not be confused with matriarchy since even in matrilineal societies women never have more power than men and, most often less. As garden produce became more important and plows and draft animals came into use, true agriculture appeared. Since men have been the teamsters of the world and also have assumed to themselves activities as those activities become more valuable, descent and property inheritance through the male became

common. With the increasing importance of property, hierarchical differences became particularly significant. To protect property and the hierarchy, the state was imposed by the dominant hierarchs and the several facets of life became increasingly authoritarian. Thus, as I see it there is no need to resort to geography to understand this evolution. One should look to property and the drive to hierarchy and domination.

I have been given the Preface to a new 2006 edition for further comment. In this Preface the author states that he has acquired more evidence on ancient violence in the Old World and on the peaceful nature of American Indians, but he is primarily concerned with having overlooked the violent and extreme patristic nature of Islamic society in the earlier edition.

Not having seen his new evidence I cannot comment on it except to say that I, too, have seen new evidence relevant to the Saharasia thesis, but evidence which challenges DeMeo's environmental determinist contention. Archaeological excavation in Germany dated at 7000 years ago indicates that the people in these sites were pastoralists and most likely had a patrilineal and patrilocality kinship. The new Preface seems to lose the old emphasis on geographical determinism. Since it keeps up with the latest popular fad DeMeo apparently now has infused his book with a lot of Islamophobia. Like so many other commentators unfamiliar with the Islamic world he fails to recognize that Islam is not a monolithic system, but there are many Islams, and a very small minority of one of them is oriented to violence and extreme "fundamentalism." In addition, he still does not recognize the adverse significance to his theory of the fact that three of the most authoritarian and oppressive systems ever created—Communism, Fascism and Nazism arose out of moist, forest environments far removed from deserts.

¹ See my review of Marija Gimbutas, "The Civilization of the Goddess," *Anarchist Studies*, vol 2, 1994

² For more on matrism see my article, "On the Matricentric Character of Early Human Society," *Any Time Now*, no 24, 2006,

A Paltry Equality

Review by
Ralph Dumont

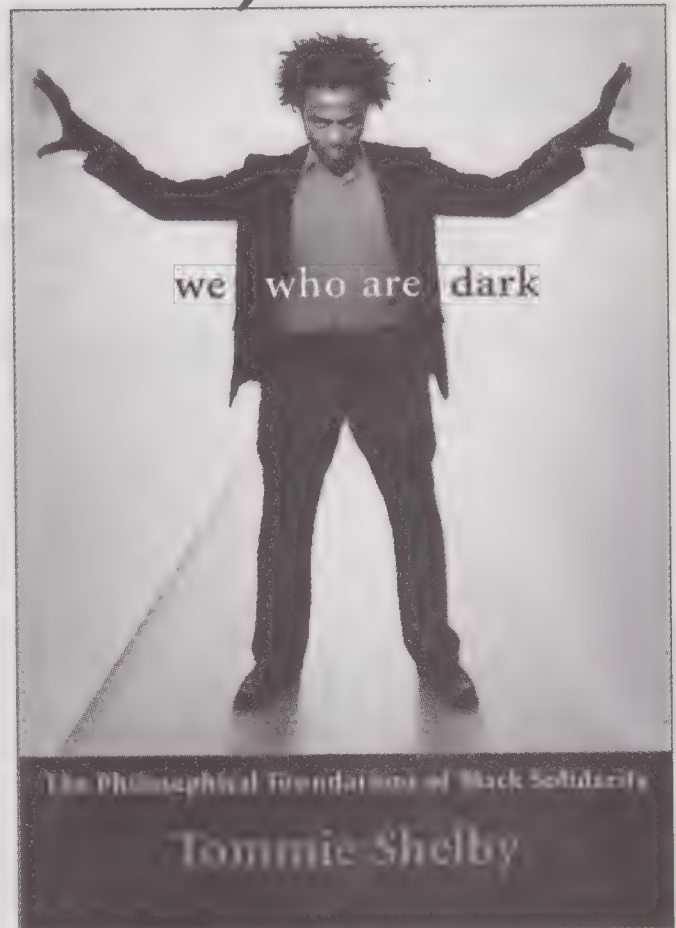
**We Who Are Dark:
The Philosophical Foundations
of Black Solidarity**
Tommie Shelby
(Belknap/Harvard U. Press, 2005)
302 pages, paper, \$27.95

In this book Tommie Shelby, a professor of social sciences at Harvard University, offers a thoughtful and often insightful critique—although by no means a complete rejection—of identity politics and black nationalism. The critique is unfortunately hitched to a political vision in league with the contractarian liberalism of John Rawls. “My argument is directed mainly toward progressives,” says Shelby. Anarchism is not approached, or even mentioned, in this book. The themes explored by this African American academic intellectual seem almost, although never quite, to enter onto a parallel path with “post-left” anarchy. Shelby wants to go toward a “post-nationalist” position. He wants a black self-determination that is “post-racist, post-essentialist, post-civil rights” in which blackness is depoliticized. But he proves unwilling in the end to let go of it in the present. For him, post-nationalism represents a maximal goal for the future. He defines his position as one of “pragmatic nationalism” and searches for examples of this stance in black nationalist and Pan-Africanist thinkers of the past. Shelby mounts his arguments from the doubtful ramparts of philosophy and sociology, but even so, many of them are quite telling.

Shelby distinguishes solidarity from identity, and questions all forms of positive shared identity. In his analyses, he leans on a sociological distinction between “thick” and “thin” forms of black identity. Thick modes are often based on biological determinism, and stress blackness as nationality, ethnicity, or family. They call for black cultural autonomy and “politics of difference.” A thin identity, on the other hand, is a “vague social marker” imposed by the contingency of shared subordination defined in racial terms, and the collective desire to overcome it. Shelby upholds the thin identity, but does not

embrace a “color-blind” position that is neither ashamed nor proud of being black—for him, as long as race prejudice persists, there should still be a pride in black identity. He wants a blackness that is neither too “thick” nor too “thin”—a fussy balancing act, perhaps, but it stems from the insistence on recognizing the situation of black people in America as the product of uniquely disadvantaged circumstances arising from the legacies of slavery and Jim Crow, and various ongoing forms of institutional and popular racism.

Who gets to speak for the “black community”? This commonly heard term implies a corporate “we” and serves to mask the class interests of black elites and ideologues. In some of his best observations, Shelby points out that there is not, and cannot be, consensus on the meaning of blackness as identity, and that black nationalism as a form of corporatism is inadequate, even oppressive in its own way, owing to the diversity of the black population. The emphasis on group identity and majoritarianism of black unity has reactionary implications. It avoids criticism of the power of black churches and preachers, or of the patriarchy and prejudice against homosexuality inherent in nationalist movements. Thick black nationalism is uncomfortable with biracial or multiracial identities. And there are other forms of diversity that prove a poor fit for a unitary nationalist identity. One of them is regional—which is most authentic? East Coast, West Coast, Midwest, or Southern Negro folk culture? Another is generational—there is a considerable difference in outlook between African Americans



born after the end of Jim Crow and those who grew up during the civil rights era, a difference reflected in reactions to hip-hop culture, among other things. And on top of all this, identity politics imposes a groupthink that is stifling to freedom-seeking black individuals.

Does being black (i.e. having dark skin) mean that one is, or should be, culturally black? Shelby stands against the obligation of blacks to embrace “black” culture. The inevitable corollary becomes the question of what is white identity. Is it Anglo-Christian, Euro-American, European, or Western? Whites too are part of blackness, as seen in the synthesis of Euro-American and African-American aspects of popular culture in the United States from the jazz age to the present. Shelby provides a good quote from Ralph Ellison: the American “melting pot did indeed melt, creating such

deceptive metamorphoses and blending of identities, values and lifestyles that most American whites are culturally part Negro American without realizing it." Black culture has not been created by blacks alone, it does not belong to them alone, and it is not they alone who have an interest in preserving it.

The two historic figures upon whom Shelby leans in particular are Martin R. Delany and W.E.B. Du Bois. Delany was at various times in his adventurous life a physician, writer, officer of the U.S. Army in the Civil War, agent of the Reconstruction government of South Carolina, and explorer in the Niger

was greatly concerned with the problem of class division among American blacks. In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), he emphasized the need for quality higher education. The black middle class had an obligation to the black working classes and ghetto poor by showing commitment to economic justice rather than just black cultural pride. He saw black elites wanting to assimilate to the dominant culture, and being ashamed of the black underclass, who they thought were undermining their own chance to be accepted by white elites. Here blackness was primarily associated with behavior of the black poor. Garvey, a political

nationalist aims of Soviet Russia, even as Du Bois himself grew closer to Stalinism. On this path some black nationalists disappointed with the compromises of the USSR were led to the seemingly more radical patronage of the People's Republic of China. These developments likewise affected the black liberation movements in the United States such as the Black Panther Party, which held a Maoist/Third Worldist ideological stance.

Pan-Africanism had long had a large contribution from the Caribbean region, beginning with Garvey himself (a Jamaican), and Henry Sylvester Williams of Trinidad. The

movement was manifested in popular culture with reggae music and the Rastafarians, who often invoked themes associated with Garveyism. Afrocentrism became a cultural concept strongly associated with Pan-Africanism, although for others, the

concept was expanded to include Dravidians of south India and aborigines of Australia, New Guinea, and the Melanesian islands. Black nationalism, like the Third World nationalism it had become an important subset of, probably reached its peak in the 1970s, and found itself adrift with the worldwide atrophy of state socialism and the resilient power of US and European capitalism.

In the period of the 1960s and '70s, nationalism was in competition and coexistence with the liberal civil rights movement. Shelby definitely aligns himself more with the civil rights movement. At the same time, however, he recognizes that this movement primarily benefited—and largely created—the black middle class of which he is part.

Shelby's rejection of the more radical forms of black nationalism seems to entail an avoidance of all radicalism. But the issues discussed in his book should be of interest to those who wonder why anarchist ideas do not hold more attraction for African-descended people in the modern world. The battle for black liberation in the United States has had much more to do with movements of progressive statism (liberalism and Marxism) than with anarchism. The relation of capitalist development to slavery and its aftermath in America is a complex subject, heavily invested with, and to some extent obscured by, emotional and moral attitudes. The "slave power" was at one time instrumental

continued on page 25

The relation of capitalist development to slavery and its aftermath in America is a huge subject, heavily invested with, and to an extent obscured by, emotional and moral attitudes.

Valley Expedition with the goal of setting up African American settlements in West Africa. He advocated for emigration of blacks from the United States, although not necessarily to Africa. In this respect he was a forerunner of Marcus Garvey. He also expressed solidarity with Native Americans and Latin American nations and thought that all "colored" peoples of the world should cooperate against European and American imperialism. Delany upheld the moral virtue of "manhood," by which he meant such values as courage, self-respect, and self-reliance. Shelby, applying a touch of feminism, suggests that a better term for this would be "vigor." He points to strains in Delany's thought compatible with the vision of "pragmatic nationalism": a favorable view of multiraciality, and appeals to non-blacks to cooperate with the project to regenerate Africa. Delany's claim that Africans were the first to develop civilization rested on the belief that ancient Egyptians and Ethiopians were racially "black" or "Negro." If this claim were true, it would not be the honor that Delany thought it was. In fact, the advent of complex state civilizations in Africa south of the Sahara, leaving aside the interactions of Egypt with Nubia and other lands to its south, was a relatively late development (ca. 6th to 7th century CE)—and its absence hitherto certainly no discredit to Africans.

Du Bois, a cofounder of the NAACP who became influenced increasingly by Marxism and Pan-Africanism and finished his life in the newly independent African nation of Ghana,

opponent of Du Bois, distrusted the black middle classes (Du Bois' "Talented Tenth") and built his back-to-Africa movement with appeals to the lower classes, a stance later echoed by Malcolm X.

Shelby barely mentions Du Bois' Marxism, but this is a theme worth examining. Black nationalism was given encouragement, beginning in the late 1920s, by the Communist Party USA and its "Black Belt Nation" thesis, an idea indebted to Lenin's "right of nations to self-determination" and Stalin's writings on "Marxism and the National Question." According to this theory, black liberation in the United States was a matter of national liberation and the creation of a separate black nation-state of farmers in the Deep South. This idea was eventually abandoned by the CP along with other trappings of Stalinism.

Leninist influences were adopted by nationalist leaders in independent African states, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana in particular. Some attempts were made to connect "African socialism" with the communitarian traditions of African village life, for example in Tanzania under Julius Nyerere. But these efforts foundered under the inevitable domination of the bureaucratic state. After the Second World War, two developments converged—decolonization and the decay of the socialist idea. For Pan-Africanists, the oppressive model provided by the Soviet Union became divisive; George Padmore, a colleague of Du Bois and adviser to Nkrumah, denounced Stalin for using blacks to further the

DOING JUSTICE TO THE ILLEGALISTS

Review by Lawrence Jarach

Without a Glimmer of Remorse

Pino Cacucci

(Read and Noir Books, 2005)

368 pages, paper, \$18.95

Available from CAL Press

This fictionalized biography of Jules Bonnot, the (in)famous French anarchist illegalist is the second novel published by Read and Noir, a crime fiction imprint of Christie Books (the first, *The Man Who Killed Durruti*, is also currently in print). Meticulously researched and well written (and nicely translated by the indefatigable Paul Sharkey), *Glimmer* is a joy to read. I chose it for reading while I was on vacation for 10 days, and while I didn't quite finish it in that time (I was simultaneously reading another two books, as is my habit), I was not far from the end by the time I returned home. From the first chapter—which sets the scene for rest of the book taking place in flashback—to the epilogue I was thoroughly engaged. We get to learn about the anarchism of Bonnot, Victor Kibalchich (later more famous as Victor Serge, Bolshevik), and just about all the people who eventually became known as the “Bonnot Gang.”

Glimmer follows Bonnot from his beginnings as a disgruntled coal miner, through a short stint in the army, becoming an automobile mechanic, a chauffeur for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (they have some interesting discussions about Sherlock Holmes and writing fiction), then back to France to become infamous as the first person to use a getaway car after a bank robbery. Throughout, conditions of employment, relations to bosses, managers, and cops are dealt with in a way that is clearly sympathetic to an anarchist temperament. We learn about Stirner and Ni-

etzsche, Albert Libertad, Emile Henry, and Ravachol.

The driving rage and refusal of self-sacrifice that motivates the illegalists is explained early on:

So who would ever see the advent of the just society advocated by Malatesta? Maybe not even their children's children's children. And Jules Bonnot had even been denied the hope of making the world a better place for the sake of his son. Because he had no son now...

Action. Action was the only thing left. But action without sacrifice, without the claim of responsibility, without offering one's throat to the hounds. Hitting the exploiters with their fondness for the guillotine and for champagne in precisely the way they cherished most, their purse. Not for the sake of lining one's pockets, but so as to repay them in kind for a little of the terror they spread, so cocksure that they were unreachable. And not with bombs, but at gunpoint, wresting back a fraction of everything that they were hiding from the millions in despair. (103)

I was interested in all the characters, even the cynical head police investigator, who gets some choice dialogue. I am forced to wonder if I am so enthusiastic about this novel because I had already read as much as I could about the “Bonnot Gang” in English. It's difficult to say, but I have since gone back to read parts of Serge's self-serving autobiography of



that time as well as Richard Parry's excellent study, and I have found Cacucci's fictionalization standing up quite well. It's not a work of art; literary conventions are not challenged; there's an omniscient narrator, the narrative is linear (except for the scene-setting end at the beginning), and the points of view are clear. It doesn't matter. *Glimmer* is wildly entertaining. I didn't even mind all the typos—and anyone who knows me will know how much that means! I have never recommended a work of fiction so highly before.

book reviews

Stop Torture continued from page 13

liams puts it, being against torture means being against the state.

The state engages in torture, at root, because torture represents another source of coercion, and states are in the business of coercion...

If we want to wipe out torture, and not merely limit it or force it into invisibility, we must address its root causes. We must frustrate the US government's global ambitions, pit ourselves against the interests it serves, and disassemble

the institutions that implement its program... It is, in short, necessary that we radically transform the institutions of political power, that we smash the state and break down the mechanisms of coercion so that they operate at a scale directly controllable by local communities. (p. 252)

If we accept that under specific circumstances all of us are capable of betraying our friends, of becoming torturers, then what, more useful, conversations do we have?

Blast continued from page 14



THE "DIGNITY" OF LABOR

Beyond providing greater insight into Berkman and the people he supported, *The Blast* itself had a personality that class struggle anarchists in particular would do well to emulate or at least learn from. The art provided a great deal of that personal-

ity with its social realist stylism and crystal clear message against militarism and capitalism. Robert Minor, an anarchist and political cartoonist of the time (who later joined the Communists), did most of the cover art with grease crayon on paper.

During *The Blast's* short tenure the

causes and turmoil that it directly involved itself in included the Caplan-Schmidt trial (for the Los Angeles Times Building bomb), the incarceration of the Magón brothers, the United States Postmaster for refusing to mail the newspaper, the show trial of Mooney and Billings (for the Preparedness Day bombing), and the founding of the No Conscription League (that eventually led to Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman's imprisonment in 1918 for conspiracy "to induce persons to refuse to register under the Draft Act)."

Reading *The Blast* inspires visions of what it would be like to produce an anarchist newspaper today. Would it reflect the kind of protest focus of Indymedia (and their newspapers like *Faultlines* and to a lesser degree the *Independent*)? Would it be an agitational directed at the working class like *The Blast* was intended to be? Would it be possible to produce a paper as meaningful, beautiful, and targeted in a world where the printed word seems dying? Is the internet the right context for anarchists to agitate, inform, and debate? Or does working through the internet mean accepting marginalization for the price of the perception of an audience? These questions are among the many that one reader is faced with upon reading *The Blast*. Others may ask (and answer) different questions as a result of this book but very few anarchists can avoid how useful and provocative this reprint is.

Travelogue continued from page 16

associate with them." As Meckfessel writes, "Construction paper identities make cut-and-paste lives."

Suffled How It Gush also acts as a tour of the Balkan anarchist underground. Infoshops, anti-racist skinheads, and late nights in biker bars all play prominent roles in the intermingled narratives of the author's several visits. In some ways, the anarchists of Southeastern Europe have much in common with their North American and Western European counterparts. Like many other anarchists around the globe, they fight fascists on the streets, squat abandoned buildings, go to punk shows and publish zines. But the

Suffled is both enjoyable and informative, and is easily the best introduction to recent Balkan history for anarchist readers.

social situation they grew up in was one of an all-powerful socialist state falling apart into a seemingly interminable genocidal conflict; the heartfelt sincerity of their anti-authoritarian and anti-war views cannot be called into question. For them, anarchy is not an idea that lives only in books, but is rather the only desirable solution they can find for the horror of their lived experiences. The images of these comrades working to create a better world for themselves here and now, living in ruined cities full of buildings pockmarked with artillery fire, is an inspiration especially for those of who have grown up in the relative social peace of the West.

Neither *Clandestines* nor *Suffled How It Gush* break much new ground in their already overcrowded genre; it seems that new anarchist travel books are coming out on a regular basis. However, where *Clandestines* comes across merely as the self-important memoirs of a well-meaning activist, *Suffled* is both enjoyable and informative, and is easily the best introduction to recent Balkan history for anarchist readers. In the history of the anarcho-travelogue, *Suffled How It Gush* may earn a place in the bibliography, while *Clandestines* should be at best relegated to an embarrassing footnote.

Dark continued from page 22

in building the foundational accumulation of capital, but later became an obstacle to its further development. The European and Euro-American radicals of the nineteenth century were not all in agreement on the issue of the Civil War. Proudhon sympathized with the South, while Bakunin and Marx supported the North. The "native American" individualist anarchists such as Spooner were for abolition of slavery, but also for the principle of secession.

The US federal interventions in the South, from the Civil War and subsequent Reconstruction, to the civil rights struggles of the 1950s-60s, may well have been limited to establishing what freedoms can exist under the empire of capital and its technological state. Nevertheless, they did contribute in an important, even decisive, way to a real political liberation of black people in America. This historic pattern helps explain why, despite the irredeemable corruption of even the most "progressive" government, African Americans remain overwhelmingly loyal to the fading New Deal coalition of a Democratic Party that takes them for granted, and look to state actions (e.g. creation and enforcement of antidiscrimination laws) to protect their interests in a society where antiblack racism lingers. This is something that has to be taken into account if blacks are to be greatly receptive to an anarchist critique of leftist statism.

The Negroes of the Black Belt South migrated en masse to the northern cities early

in the twentieth century and became a working class alongside the immigrants who fled political oppression and economic privation in Europe's less industrialized regions. In the


ity. Even as black disadvantage, evident in such phenomena as poverty, police brutality, and highly disproportionate incarceration rates, remains a huge problem, a few blacks

According to Shelby, the real legacy of the civil rights struggle is that every black individual should be able to participate as an equal in American life.

course of that century they became embroiled in the social battles that forced upon American capitalism the radical reform of its most retrograde aspect, the Jim Crow segregation of the South, which affected blacks most particularly and brutally. The black-white polarity that long governed racial political identities in the United States is now losing its centrality and is being pushed into the background by new waves of immigration that are rendering the ethnic composition of the United States increasingly Latino/a and Asian. Particularly significant is the immigration from Spanish American countries, where questions of race and racial identity have historically been formulated in ways significantly different from the US. The situation of African Americans today has changed a lot: the civil rights movement was stalled not only by recent Republican Party ascendancy, but also by its own successes and bureaucratic accommodations. The elimination of legally sanctioned racism highlights the limitations of the law in dealing with economic inequal-

have even risen to participate at the helm of the American empire.

According to Shelby, the real legacy of the civil rights struggle is that every black individual should be able to participate as an equal in American life. This kind of equality, stated as such, is a paltry ambition. It is not only black nationalism that must be questioned, but all nationalism, including US patriotism, whether liberal, conservative, or any other brand. The ideas of post-civil rights and post-nationalism are a good enough, if tepid, start. Can they lead to a revolution of desire and a movement to reconnect with nature, rather than back to the quicksand of political ideology? Unfortunately, they have a difficult road to travel between a new "Talented Tenth" represented by academic intellectuals and a hip-hop street mired in the mystique of the ghetto gangsta-hustler.



Jeff Faerber

Anarchy Summer Tour BURNS Across the Country

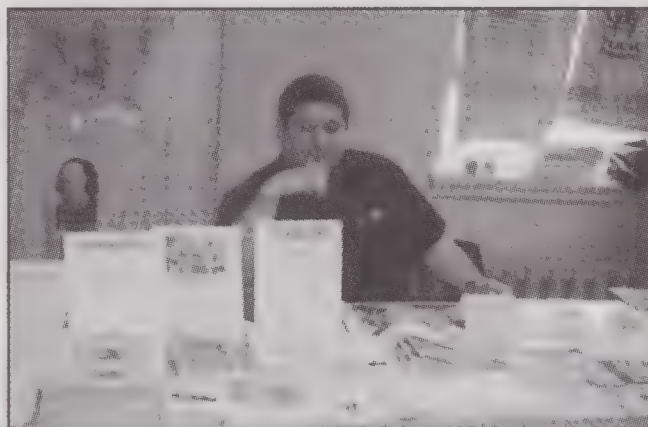
by Aragorn!

To start out the hottest summer (to date) the planet has had, I decided to help out by spending two months driving around the country, burning fossil fuels and talking about *Anarchy* and a variety of other anarchist topics to people all around the Midwest and East Coast. Much of the collective joined the tour at one point or another and together we visited over two dozen towns and attended five different weekend events over a nine week period.

As a member of the new collective I wanted to get involved in the enormous project of understanding people's perception of the magazine and getting direct knowledge of local anarchist politics throughout the country. I was able to do this because of personal economic devastation (resulting in not having a job) and the generosity of my close friends. I kept my expectations of audience, interest, and economics virtually non-existent, fearing that approaching new people and places with even a modicum of hope would guarantee a result of despair. I was not disappointed.

The Examined Life

I made the choice before I left that I was going to blog this trip. I ended up writing one to three posts per week. The upside to writing frequently is that it was a way for me to keep my friends back home apprised of what I was up to and for me to keep track of the specifics of the wheres and whens of the trip. It also allowed for a pretty accessible way for people to share their thoughts about my visits to their town and argue with each other (as if the internet doesn't provide enough opportunities for this otherwise).



There were, however, quite a few downsides to blogging the trip. Just as I am not a spectacular letter writer to friends who I would love to keep in touch with, and so am not in the habit of that kind of writing, it ended up being pretty inconvenient to write about the prior day's events for friends-out-of-sight. I have also never been that interested in photography,

not from a lack of desire but due to a personality that does not lend itself to interacting with the environment through a device. I never think to take pictures until the moment has long passed, so bringing a camera and taking pictures was counter-intuitive. On top of all that, I ended up highly self-censoring my blog. While I did honestly reflect on my own presentations and the process that I was going through as I learned how to speak to audiences

non-, barely, and differently anarchist, I tried (successfully for the most part) to speak well of the places and people that I met along the way. The one time that I didn't (in relation to Paul Finch from the Northwest Anarchist Communist Federation) I regret as it fed into a particular binary that I have long since grown bored of.

This said, I am fairly pleased with the results of writing about the trip as I took it. It demonstrated a little bit of a journalistic perspective and ended up making the tour, the magazine, and to some extent me, more approachable.

The Anarchist Flea Market Circuit

Part of the motivation for touring as long as I did was to attend the variety of anarchist events that happened throughout the summer on the East Coast. All together I got to the Montreal Anarchist Book Fair in

the middle of May, the Our Lives Ahead conference (Indianapolis, IN) at the end of May, the Allied Media Conference (Bowling Green, OH) in the middle of June, the Mid-Atlantic Radical Book Fair (Baltimore MD) at the end of June, the Earth First! Rendezvous (Western VA) in early July and the Providence Anarchist Book fair in the middle of July.

One conspicuous trend at these events was the Anarchist Flea Market. This is the group of people who, products in tow, descend on any town that is throwing an anarchist event. This makes sense in that all of the established anarchist projects require some income and are hard pressed to find a better source of revenue than a high concentration of anarchists who are in the same location for a day or two. It is arguably true that established anarchist print projects (books distributors, magazines, and publishers) represent something like a thread of continuity through anarchist circles. Most of the people involved in these projects have been involved to a greater or lesser degree in the anarchist milieu for a decade or more and are, as a result, informed, interesting, stubborn, and conscientious. Furthermore the distance between towns is far closer on the right hand side of this country than on the left coast. You can reach virtually every major city on the East Coast within six to eight hours including Montreal, New York, Boston, Providence, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. It is pretty easy to justify the travel expense and effort on the East Coast in a way that is not true on the West.

The disturbing elements of the Anarchist Flea Market are what you might expect. An unfriendly tension for anarchists is the reality of living within a capitalist economy and, as a result, most projects that are distinctively anarchist also involve economic exchange. This seems to result in a consensus by anarchists to pursue the least financially rewarding projects possible. Radical book publishing and selling, or indeed publishing in general, is very competitive, centralized, and labor intensive so naturally anarchists are deeply attracted to it. As a result the relative success of AK Press (success in this case meaning growing to the level of being a small company with paid staff rather

than being a one or two person volunteer project) dominates conversations about how to better do the impossible (meaning being a sustainable publisher). Outside of publishing projects the only other members of the Anarchist Flea Market are the very small number of artists who hitch their wagon to the anarchist train.

The Anarchist Flea Market demonstrates the disconnect between the quality of our projects (and products) and our desperate lack of a marketing department.

Regionalism and Universality

During the weeks between these events I traveled throughout the land, from Minneapolis to Kansas City in the west to Chapel Hill and Montpelier in the east. Mostly I spoke on anarchist topics for anarchist audiences and was inspired and informed by the different activities and projects in each of the towns I visited. Many projects were consistent thematically but the regionalism of the anarchist milieu was reflected in the specific emphasis and biases of each project.

Perhaps taking a cue from the punk rock DIY scene, there are several small publishing distributions based out of a number of towns that table at a variety of events including punk shows, community, and radical events. Kersplebedeb, Alive and AWOL, Old Mule, Fire Starter, One Thousand Emotions, Swarm Press, the Institute for Experimental Freedom (IEF), A New World in our Hearts are just a few that I met that reflected the interests of the distributors and the group of people that surround

them. One project that stood out for me during the trip was the IEF. Rather than distribute the same old things they "attempt to wrestle detournement from the grasps of the adbusters-types and postmodern advertisers, and place it back into the hands of agents of revolt." They redid covers of two of my zines to great effect.

Food Not Bombs continues to be a way that an anarchist community feels like it has a positive relationship to the geographical community it inhabits.

It also provides an entrance for young people with activist inclinations to meet each other and



have a project that is easy to understand and be involved in. Most communities offer Food Not Bombs on an infrequent schedule (once or twice a week) that reminds me how impressive it is that the Bay Area does eleven feedings a week total (every weekday on both sides of the bay plus Sunday in Oakland).

Infoshops and bookstores serve as community resources, time drains, and important topics of conversation in each of the towns they are in. As anyone in the publishing world knows, independent bookstores are having a very hard time. The rise of chain stores through the 80s and 90s has greatly centralized book consumption. The advent of the internet allows the illusion of far greater access to niche topics than would otherwise be available as well as another outlet to purchase things. Include the difficulty of having a radical intention with your storefront and it is a miracle that any of the radical independent places I visited can survive. These included Boxcar Books, Arise! Books, International Books, Crossroads Infoshop, Madison Infoshop, Red Emma's Bookstore, Black Sheep Books, and Lucy Parson Center.

One way to organize an understanding of the communities that I visited would be into categories of college town versus established anarchist community. To generalize the college towns, audiences were of people aged 20-24 who were somewhat new to anarchist thought but were very engaged with current ideas and conflicts about tactics, ideology, and strategy. The established anarchist communities tended towards a wider age range and a more sporadic interest in topical anarchist themes. An example of this would be St. Louis, an incredible city for anarchists for a variety of reasons. It seems to be a rustbelt town that is only slowly growing

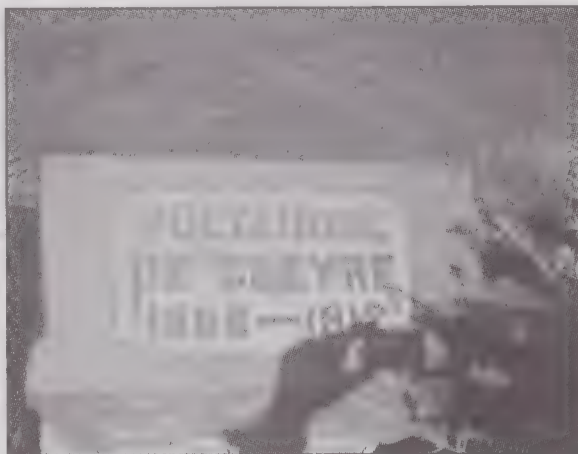


into a thriving post-industrial city with housing costs that reflect this. This means that the broader anarchist community has actually been able to make more-or-less permanent spaces in the community. The extent of these exceed this report back, and will be a topic for another time, but include several interesting literature projects and multiple owned buildings and homes within a community of fairly young people. This means that the people in St. Louis seem a lot more concerned with refurbishing their homes than they do the bombing in Lebanon or the Green Scare. Another, more positive consequence is that the town seems likely to continue to be a source of living anarchism for decades to come, as opposed to the Midwest college towns with their perpetually high turnover.

Post What? Federation of Who?

As I had experienced from time on the East Coast (and the RAT conference in particular) the interests of the West Coast are very different than the East.

This can be discussed in terms of a Red and Green division, or a Left and not-Left division (although that would be a selective reading of anarchists on the West Coast), or the relationship between anarchists and academia, unions, NGOs, or radical environmentalism but these would all be simplifications. The cognitive dissimilarity between the coasts is the point.



The Midwest, by and large, was ambivalent to most of the incendiary topics that consume the discussions on the Coasts. Perhaps this results from the generally practical orientation of the Midwest and a greater interest in carpentry than syndicalism, and food than primitivism, but probably also comes from a general ambivalence towards theory and strategy. This isn't entirely parochialism as

much as it is a matter of priorities. Living is more important than talking about living. Furthermore, sectarian issues that seem to crystallize large coastal towns into entirely separate anarchist factions are largely resolved in the Midwest with a general attitude

of "it's all good." This indulgent perspective was frustrating as it made emotional engagement with people difficult. But it was also reassuring since it seems that avoiding sectarian bullshit is a necessary component to a sustainable anarchist community. I expect many of the people that I met in the Midwest will be around in 10 or 20 years.

On the other hand the details and specifics of the projects in the Midwest are virtually unknown outside the Midwest and they suffer as a result. Literature and propaganda projects (like ours) can be criticized for many reasons but the addition of a geographically centered anarchist publication would improve the feeling I had in most of these towns. There was a general despair in the Midwest about the lack of people: a lack that influences the kind and scale of possible projects. The typical conflict between transitory and immobile people is exacerbated by there being so few of either and by there not being a pre-existing infrastructure for projects and options. Projects tend to have to start from scratch or involve having to deal with the one person who is the founder and most concerned member. Predictable resentment ensues.

There Is Nothing Left to Learn

There was interest in an anarchist speaking tour despite the idea seeming like an anachronism. The concept of a traveler sharing information about other towns (without being a particular burden on the town they were staying in) was a welcome change from the traveling culture that only seems interested in taking, rather than sharing, resources. While my expectations about audience size were very low, people came out at every event I made it to. Much of the time these audiences wanted to talk about what anarchy was rather than about *Anarchy* or my specific presentation but they were consistently interested in hearing someone with more experience talk about the consequences, experiences, and particulars of anarchist politics.

When I originally planned the tour I conceived of my presentations as examples of a non-ideological perspective. Instead of having a stump speech about the magazine or my particular interests I offered each of my hosts about a half dozen different presentations including bolo bolo, community (and conflict), indigenous anarchism, second wave anarchy, the critique of the left, the Bay

Area anarchist milieu, and anarchist people of color. Ideally this would have allowed a presentation to coincide with a current discussion or interest in a local community. Instead it caused a lot of confusion since most of my hosts didn't particularly care about which presentation I should give, meaning I usually chose the topic without really knowing the audience I would be speaking to. My theoretical inclination meant that many of my audiences didn't know enough about what I was talking about to ask what I was talking about.

Throughout the tour I grappled with the gap between what I was interested in talking about and what mixed audiences wanted to hear. I learned how to speak to a variety of audiences, how to be responsive to them, when to talk theory and when to listen to where the audience was coming from.

Meeting Your Enemies, Real and Perceived

North American anarchism is quite factionalized given how small of a political tendency it is. I both participate in and am embarrassed by this. The argument for this factionalism is that it represents the very different motivations and traditions of contemporary anarchists. However, factionalism is not the same thing as engagement, critical or otherwise. More pointedly, factionalism as practiced usually looks like people interacting with each other as labels, as artificial constructions of perceived political identity, rather than as people.

In my case this included being called a post-leftist, a liberal, a lifestyleist, not-an-anarchist, and a crimethinker (often at the same time). When these kind of epithets start to get tossed around and remain the way that the resulting conversation gets

framed, it demonstrates a real inability to communicate with actual human beings. This is ironic given that the general criticism is oriented around a perception of how to talk to "regular people." During a few of these conversations the rhetoric was able to be set aside and, as a result, nuanced and I had interesting conversations about exactly what benefits and problems there are to the different approaches that exist within anarchism.

Beyond the exhausting elements of sectarian anarchist politics was one funny incident that

is worth repeating. At the Mid-Atlantic Radical Book Fair I met someone who obviously was very



informed about the modern anarchist scene and was wearing a t-shirt with the slogan "Commie Fag" (with the C replaced by a hammer and sickle). During our conversation I corrected someone making a sectarian comment about NEFAC—the Northeast Federation of Anarchist Communists, a federation of Platformists scattered throughout the North East (from Baltimore to Montreal). The Commie Fag was clearly in NEFAC, appreciated my correction, and after a brief chat invited me to lunch with a couple other members of NEFAC. After a brief sidebar with my companions about whether it was actually safe for me to go into a van filled with Platformists (who did not seem inclined toward creating a safe space for a collective member of *Anarchy*) I went and had a pretty good time. Despite my wariness about being outnumbered by hostiles, they actually didn't seem that interested in me, or giving me a hard time, at all. They were far more interested in each other's company and in talking about fighting nazis, dealing with their legal problems, and other topics that wouldn't have been unusual at any meeting of anarchists of any stripe. I survived lunch with the NEFACers unscathed!

Conclusions

Anarchy has survived for the last 26 years by changing with the times and inclinations of the people producing it and reading it. The magazine moved to the newsstand and to a standard format to make it easier to be produced by fewer people. Today newsstand sales of the magazine are shrinking, and not just because of mistakes made since we have taken over production of the magazine; the entire magazine industry is shrinking. This is particularly true of journals like ours that do not appeal to a general audience and have a fairly small print run. Our desire to maintain the magazine over the next 26 years means learning about our readers and discovering the ways that we need to change.

One lesson I learned was that the people who read our magazine are not necessarily the same people who came to the presentations. Partly this is because of how brief the time was between the decision to make the trip and the trips start, which made it impossible to publicize the event in the magazine. So the only way that people heard about the tour was through anarchist internet news sources, the *Anarchy* website, or local publicity. The conclusion I drew, from the audience demographic and the lack of subscriptions sold, is that the people who subscribe to magazines today are not the same people

who compulsively read the internet or keep up with local events. Additionally many of our readers refuse to subscribe on principle and only buy the magazine through the newsstand or share friends' copies.

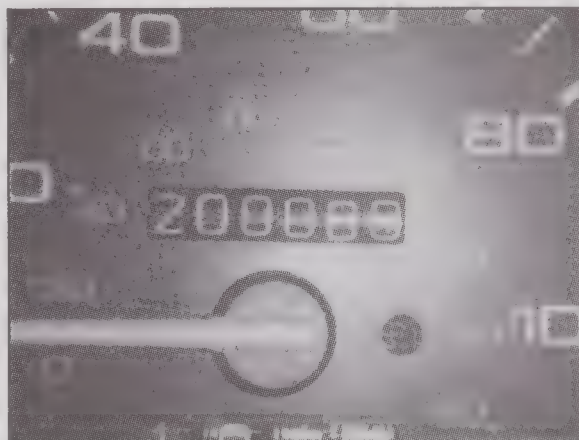
As a result of this tour, I believe more strongly than ever that there is a need for an anarchist publication that covers analysis from a broad geographic base in the US and a corresponding need for more anarchists to write about what they know. The few well-known interactive websites tend towards sectarian squabbles, and/or non-anarchist content, rather than providing space where people can experience a respectful, broadly conceived, and rigorous anarchist presence. The gatherings that happen around the land tend far too heavily toward commerce and (statist) activism and, as a result, skew very young.

I continue to be energized and inspired by the work that anarchists are doing around the country. In the fifteen years that I have been actively involved in the politic I have seen the scope of anarchists' vision increase greatly. What barely existed in a dozen major cities has spread to hundreds of small towns throughout the country. For every town that I made it to, I

was told about another nearby that I should have gone to. While I would criticize the lack of imagination in the endless repetition of half-assed Food Not Bombs projects in each town, I realize the role that such projects fill and only hope that creativity outpaces resignation into future projects. The growth and pace of anarchists is what inspires me to continue working in my own town and to continue networking with different communities.

We aren't any closer to a general transformation of society than we were fifteen years ago. It is probably an illusion to believe that an insignificantly small group of radicals are going to do much more than observe if such a change were to occur. We are, on the other hand, entirely capable of having interconnected and interdependent lives in ways that capitalism does not allow, cannot contain, and will not control. I met dozens of anarchists this summer who are attempting to do just that.

<http://anarchymag.org/aragorn>





Censored Selections

Thanks to everyone at Anarchy for printing the sections of my new AK Press volume, *Dreams of Freedom: A Ricardo Flores Magón Reader*, that have been censored by my collaborator, Chaz Bufo.

I hope that AK Press will agree to restore my work if this book should go into a second printing.

Because he was an already-published author, Chaz was granted total supervisory authority over the volume by AK Press. After I had been working on the book for several months, Chaz slandered one of my earlier translations, encouraging AK Press to remove me from the project. I had to beg AK to allow me to resume my endeavors. This initial experience taught me the clear lesson that Chaz's control over the project would be complete.

As Chaz himself admits in his dedication, I did most of the work on the volume, selecting and organizing the essays, contacting prominent Flores Magón scholars such as Benjamin Maldonado, writing the historical overview, compiling the bibliography and chronology, and so forth.

Chaz delegated himself the role of an editor, giving himself the ultimate authority to censor my work.

After reading my introductory preface "Persons Die: Noble Ideals are Eternal," Chaz sent me a highly abusive letter attacking, among other things, my references to the prophet Amos and to the ethical philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. Rather than trying to discuss and reach a compromise about our philosophical and stylistic differences (as book collaborators and anarchists are supposed to do), Chaz made a simple threat: "If you're adamant on this, this is the end of the project because there's no way on earth that I'll put my name to this."

Eventually, Chaz and I came to an agreement: I would modify the preface to take into account his objections. Furthermore, I would sign the piece myself, thereby absolving him of any responsibility for the ideas expressed therein.

With this, I thought the matter was settled.

Unfortunately, I underestimated Chaz's treachery.

Once my work on the book had been completed, I was never given an opportunity to review it. Typically, authors are allowed to see the page proofs of their text so that they can make any last minute edits. In contrast, I was never shown what was being done to my writing. When I asked AK Press about this, I was told to talk to Chaz. Chaz told me not to worry; he would be doing all the editing himself.

I finally received images of the book after it had already been sent to the printers, thereby preventing me from making any changes and from seeing how Chaz had changed it.

To my horror, Chaz mauled my writing beyond recognition. Either forgetting our earlier agreement, willfully ignoring it, or just sloppily overlooking it, Chaz eviscerated my introductory preface. Nevertheless, he signed my name to this piece that he clumsily rewrote. Worse yet, Chaz stripped away half of my acknowledgements section. While I can perhaps comprehend an overzealous editor ravaging a writer's work, what could be more sacrosanct than an author's opportunity to thank the people he wants to thank?

One could argue endlessly about who is the better writer, but these aesthetic issues are beside the point. What has been appalling to me is the manner in which I was systematically, deliberately, and deceptively excluded from making decisions about my own work.

I had once harbored the notion that we anarchists were supposed to arrive together at mutually agreeable solutions to conflicts.

In contrast, Chaz has thoroughly abused his authority, utterly disrespecting me—his collaborator—by sabotaging my work behind his back.

Ironically, the next book being published by Chaz is about consensus decision making.

What utter hypocrisy.

— Mitchell Cowen Verter

Ed. note: In the following, the parts that were taken out are bracketed

[Persons Die, but Noble Ideals are Eternal]

by Mitchell Cowen Verter

[The Mexican anarchists teach us "*Las personas mueran, pero los ideales buenas son eternos*": Persons die, but noble ideals are eternal. This romantic notion contains within it a profound insight into the limits of personhood and a profound awareness of the infinite regeneration of hope. In this volume, the first anarchist remembrance of Ricardo Flores Magón published in the nation of his exile, we must carefully

consider how to understand his legacy. In particular, we must guard against the myth that Flores Magón himself always warned about: that of *personalismo*, of identifying the struggle for human liberation with a certain leader. One can point towards the example of the authoritarian revolutionary figure Ernesto "Che"

Guevara as an object lesson in the perils of a cult of personality.¹ When one identifies a hope with a personal leader, one condemns the struggle for liberation to be something that can be easily represented and repeated; co-opting a revolutionary dream into an icon that capitalism can easily turn into a commodity to sell alcohol or pop music.^{2]}

In Ricardo Flores Magón's 1917 play *Victimas y Verdugos* (Victims and Executioners), the [sincere] worker José defends his companion Isabel from a judge who arrives with a group of gendarmes to throw her and her sick, dying mother out on to the street. After José proclaims that the bourgeoisie have prostituted the

And the old people say that now the wind, the rain, and the sun are talking to the earth in a new way, and that the poor should not continue to harvest death, now it is time to harvest rebellion.

concepts of "justice" and "rights" to forward their own interests and to whip down the poor, the judge furiously demands, "Are you an anarchist?" José responds, "I am a friend of justice, of human justice, of the justice that is not written in the codes, of the justice that prescribes that all human beings have the right to live without exploiting and without being exploited, without ordering and without being ordered." Falsely believing that he has finally uncovered the [personality that directs] José's revolutionary awareness, the judge shouts to his gendarmes, "This man is a *magonista*" – a follower of Ricardo Flores Magón – "Search him!" However, José, restrained and patted down by authorities, indignantly responds "I am not a *magonista*: I am an anarchist. An anarchist does not have idols."^{3]}

[Even though certain scholars and some radicals use "*magonista*" as shorthand to refer to those who have been inspired by the profound dream of Ricardo Flores Magón, one must immediately realize that this term is a misnomer. Indeed, Flores Magón warned the US socialist leader Eugene V. Debs that concerning oneself with "isms" would only obscure the great task of human liberation. However, certain historians have consistently described the course of Mexico as determined by a succession of "great men."⁴ Such writers have reduced the struggle of Emiliano Zapata, the indefatigable fighter for the dispossessed peasants of his state Morelos and all of Mexico, to the facile doctrine "*zapatismo*." By simply identifying this movement with a leader, this word thereby mutes the call of justice that provoked Zapata and his cohorts.⁵

An anarchist not only refuses to recognize a leader in the political or a military sphere, but also in the intellectual realm. From the outset, anarchists have always opposed the totalitarian Marxist-Leninist vision of a dictatorship of the proletariat. They also renounce the elitism of a Trotskyist vanguard party that leads the ignorant masses to a correct ideology, compelling them

all to accept their "party line." Believing in a certain basic decency and intelligence among all humanity, anarchism proclaims that one need not coerce others to accept any viewpoint. In the earliest document clearly attesting to his political commitments, Flores Magón distinguished his principles from authoritarian ones.] A prison letter to his brother Enrique and his comrade Praxedes Guerrero explained that they must work as "anarchists, *even from those who take us as their leaders.*"^[6] Rejecting all forms of coercion, Flores Magón believed that a true anarchist would neither order others around nor prescribe a doctrine for others to follow. Rather than leading a set of followers, true revolution-

aries [must] inspire others to action. Flores Magón explained, "Let us then, those who are conscious, prepare the popular mentality for when the moment

arrives."^[7] This notion of the anarchist intellectual as the one who [guides] rather than commands echoes the classical, Socratic idea of the philosopher as the one who frees the shackled slaves from false ideas, [conducting them towards the Good beyond Being.⁸ In his denunciations of the rapacity of the rich and the ruthlessness of the powerful, Flores Magón also evokes the biblical prophets' exhortations for justice.^{9]}

Throughout his writing, Ricardo Flores Magón repeatedly described himself as a prophet of emancipation. Traditionally, a prophet does not merely call others to justice; his own prophecy is also a response to a calling from [an Other] beyond himself. Flores Magón described his own inspiration in a similar manner: "'Onwards!' says a mysterious voice that appears, uprooting the innermost core of our being. It spurs on all those who are weary, spiritually burdened; whose swollen feet have been bled dry by the long, hard road; we who intend to rest for a while. ... 'Onwards, onwards!' the voice orders us."^[10] Similarly, Flores Magón asserted his prophetic role in human history in the essay "Utopians." "Nevertheless, at all times, the progress of humanity is indebted to the dreamers and the utopians. This thing called civilization: what is it if not the result of utopian efforts? The visionaries, the poets, the dreamers, the utopians, so disdained by 'serious' people, so persecuted by the 'paternalism' of governments: lynched here, shot down there, burnt to death, tortured, imprisoned, torn to pieces in all epochs and all countries, nevertheless, have been the engines of all movements forward, the prophets who have pointed the blind masses towards luminous paths leading to glorious summits."^[11]

Those who knew or observed Ricardo Flores Magón [also] attested to his spiritual force. Their descriptions of him tend not to focus on his personal qualities, but rather on his ability to beckon others to the struggle for human liberation. On hearing of his death, Flores

Magón's old Liberal Party comrade, Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, eulogized him by saying "he was the inspiration, the clear vision that impelled the people to revolution ... Ricardo Flores Magón saw the Revolution totally, integrally, with the vision of a prophet."^[12] Similarly, Flores Magón's closest comrade for over half his life, Librado Rivera, praised him because "his great steadfastness and heroic courage even transformed a people enslaved, downtrodden, and humiliated by the greatest of despots into a proud, valiant, and respected people, resplendently uplifting faces imbued with terror and horror towards their exploiters and torturers. Indeed, Ricardo Flores Magón was the soul of that great libertarian epic who, in the manner of Prometheus of mythological legend, infused that divine fire that impelled the people to rebellion; rebellion, the creative well of all liberties."^[13] Even Thomas Furlong, the detective who made a career out of pursuing Flores Magón and other members of the *Partido Liberal Mexicano*, described him in spiritual terms. In his 1906 report to the Mexican government, he stated that Flores Magón had "a very resolute and energetic character and is fanatical about the cause he pursues ... Ricardo is the soul of all, and without him the other people would do nothing."^[14]

As a revolutionary prophet, Ricardo Flores Magón attempted to awaken the enslaved masses of the world from their nightmares through a dream of social, economic, and political justice. As in Flores Magón's time, most people [today have been taught to accept] their degradation as part of the normal order of the universe. As an apostle of anarchism, Flores Magón taught that this misery and [this suffering] are produced by the thievery of the rich, the manipulation of religion [and ideology], and the repression of the government. These three forces conspire to uphold the very basis of injustice: the institution of private property. One can look at the history of Mexico as one example, among countless many, of how private property rights have enslaved millions. In 1511, Fernando Cortés and his [army of] conquistadors invaded Central America, irrevocably disrupting the life of the populace [by declaring this] land to be the property of Spain and subjecting the natives to foreign domination. Although Mexico eventually cast off the Spanish yoke, the powerful continued to steal the land from beneath the feet of the people. Plantation owners seized the *ejidos*, native communal holdings, as their personal property, forcing the masses who had lived on them into perpetual debt slavery. [Capitalists claimed ownership over the natural resources of Mexico such as its vast copper and gold mines.

In order to steal the common goods to benefit the few as their private property, aristocrats and capitalists utilize the coercion of government and ideology. The government creates laws protecting the dominion of the



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wealthy and employs its police to enforce obedience. Those of us who rose up in 1999 against the WTO in Seattle and around the world against global capitalism know well that officers will beat, gas, and shoot the people to protect the property of the few. In Mexico, the Catholic Church traditionally taught the masses to submit to their degradation. It upheld the hierarchy of wealth and power as divinely ordained, preaching obedience and humility to the masses. As society has transformed from a hierarchical, feudal order to a bourgeois, capitalist one, more sophisticated ideological manipulation has largely replaced these ecclesiastical doctrines. Modern systems of control employ scientists who claim that the disparity between the oppressors and the oppressed is caused by normal social distributions and by certain personality traits and perhaps even by particular genetic factors. Television and the culture of consumerism further encourage people to wallow lazily in the pit of greed where the powerful have cast them. The anarchist prophet awakens individuals from this haze, provoking their minds to question the misery around them. The revolutionary apostle beckons them to rise up against this degradation. He does not exhort them to follow a personal leader, but rather for each and all to fight for liberation themselves.

This anarchist critique of private property further underlines Flores Magón's objection to *personalismo*. The thing that a person calls its "Self" is perhaps the most private property it can own. If we anarchists take Flores Magón's analysis of private property seriously, we must further question our approach to individualism. Whereas the libertarian capitalism of Ayn Rand and the egoist anarchism of Max Stirner assert the individual's right to dominate everything, the communist anarchism of Flores Magón stresses the importance of well-being for all. In this way, Flores Magón's thought finds an echo in] the [contemporary] philosopher [of "anarchy,"] Emmanuel Levinas.^[15] Throughout his work, Levinas explores how each everyday encounter with an Other

person confronts us with a perspective that lies beyond our own consciousness, with a life that lies beyond our power to possess and control.¹⁶ Challenging our sovereign ownership of property, the Other beckons us to take responsibility for its destitution in the world. According to Levinas, prophecy is this very witness of suffering and this very demand for justice.]

A scene in *The Fourth World War*, a recent film, profoundly explores this idea of [Otherness] as a call to justice. In it, an Argentine[an] grandmother passionately [declaims] the government that has so savagely murdered so many young political dissidents, saying, "We must fight so that more children do not die. It can not be a thing of pity. It can not be that, in this country, 100 children die every day. We can not allow

Each everyday encounter with an Other person confronts us with a perspective that lies beyond our own consciousness, with a life that lies beyond our power to possess and control.

it. We must accompany the struggles. Each of us must feel, at last, that I am 'the Other.' I am 'the Other.' I am 'the Other.' I am 'the Other.' I am 'the Other.' I am 'the Other.' I am the unemployed worker. I am the revolutionary. I am those who take over the factory. I am those who do not eat. I am all of us." At the end of the film, the *Zapatista* thinker Subcomandante Marcos likewise urges, ["Make yourself our hearing in order to] listen to the word of the Other. You shall no longer be you; now you are us."¹⁷]

[The Other does not only present me with a challenge, but also offers me a chance for Regeneration.] A person may die, yet his noble ideals shall still live on in the minds and hearts of others. Even though Ricardo Flores Magón, the apostle of anarchism, was martyred for his prophecy, he spread [the fecund seed of] his dreams of freedom through his writing and his action. Across the infinity of time, hope shall spring eternally from his [grave].

1 For details of Che's authoritarianism during and after the Cuban Revolution, see "Che Guevara: Myths and Leg-ends," <http://www.spunk.org>.

2 Even Madonna, the artist best known for the way she manipulates her own image, has cast herself in a Che beret to market her newest album. Susan Smith Nash's article, "Madonna in Che Guevara's Beret. First Vodka, now Madonna: Che Guevara Image Still Sells" discusses how both Smirnoff Vodka and Madonna have utilized the Che icon. <http://www.xplana.com/articles/archives/Beret/>

3 Ricardo Flores Magón, *Verdugos y Víctimas*, Act I, Scene VII. My translation.

4 For example, Enrique Krauze's history *Mexico: Biography of Power* (Translated by Hank Heifetz. New York: Harper Collins, 1997) applies the "great man" approach to tell the story of the Mexican people, focusing on its leaders at the expense of the populace they dominated. Similarly, Ramón Eduardo Ruiz's *The Great Rebellion* (New York: W.

W. Norton, 1982) relates the history of the Mexican Revolution through the biographies of the so-called "leaders" of this uprising.

5 In contrast to the *personalismo* of historians, today's Zapatistas, or EZLN, who fight for the liberation of the *campesinos* of Chiapas, have always remained careful in their usage of Emiliano Zapata. They venerate "Zapata" more as a prophetic hope for human freedom than as a historical figure: "... And the very oldest among the old people in the villages tell of a man named Zapata who rose up for his own people and in a voice more like a song than a shout, said 'Land and Freedom.' And these old folks say that Zapata is not dead, that he is going to return. And the oldest of the old also say that the wind and the rain and the sun tell the *campesinos* when they should prepare the soil, when they should plant, and when they should harvest. They

say that hope also must be planted and harvested. And the old people say that now the wind, the rain, and the sun are talking to the earth in a new way, and that the poor should not continue to harvest death, now it is time to harvest rebellion. So say

the old people. The powerful don't listen; the words don't reach them, as they are made deaf by the witchery that the imperialists shout in their ears. 'Zapata,' repeat the youth of the poor, 'Zapata,' insists the wind, the wind from below, our wind ..." Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos in *Shadows of Tender Fury* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1995) pp. 45-6.

6 Letter from L.A. County Jail, June 13, 1908, p. *infra*.

7 Manifesto to the Anarchists of the Entire World and the Workers in General, p. *infra*.

8 Plato, *The Republic*, §514a-517a, §509a-c.

9 The religious tone of Ricardo Flores Magón's writing requires close inspection and contemplation. As an anarchist, he saw religion as one of the forces that, along with capitalism and government, preserve unjust hierarchies. Like most Mexican liberals, socialists, and anarchists, Flores Magón railed against the Catholic Church's dominion over the Mexican peasant and proletariat. By 1907, Flores Magón had developed a general view that the "death of god," the overthrow of all religion and metaphysical belief, was necessary for the end of social inequality. Nevertheless, Flores Magón frequently used theological terminology throughout his writing. For example, he repeatedly discussed the necessity of "holy rebellion" against Porfirio Díaz to bring "redemption" to the Mexican populace. Flores Magón's critique of government and capitalism can certainly be compared with the biblical prophet Amos, who caustically attacked the violence of power-hungry rulers and the barbarity of the rich. It is unclear whether any particular religious influence affected Flores Magón's writing style or whether his vocabulary and metaphors merely reflect the degree to which the Spanish language and Mexican culture have been influenced by Catholicism.

10 "Adelante," *Regeneration*, November 25, 1911. My translation.

11 "Utopians," p. *infra*.

12 Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, "Eulogy to Ricardo Flores Magón." In Ethel Duffy Turner, *Revolution in Baja Califor-*

nia (Edited and annotated by Rey Devis. Detroit: Blaine Ethridge, 1981), p. 98.

13 Librado Flores Magón, prologue to *Ricardo Flores Magón, el apóstol de la revolución social mexicana* by Diego Abad de Santillán (México: Ediciones Antorcha, 1988), p. 11. My translation.

14 Quoted in Abad de Santillán, p. 43. My translation.

15 See the section "Principle and Anarchy" in Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. Translated by Alfonso Lingis. (Pittsburgh: Duquense University Press, 1998), pp. 99-102.

16 Levinas states, "A thing does not resist acquisition; the other possessors – those whom one can not possess – contest and therefore can sanction possession itself." Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*. Translated by Alfonso Lingis. (Pittsburgh: Duquense University Press, 1969), p. 162.

17 *The Fourth World War*. Big Noise Films: 2004.



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Acknowledgements

The Russian anarchist Petr Kropotkin explains that no work can be considered the "intellectual property" of one author or set of authors. In *The Conquest of Bread*, he proclaims, "There is not even a thought, or an invention, which is not common property, born of the past and the present" [(p. 15)]. Before an author can express himself, he must first recognize the authority of others, acknowledging his allegiance to those who have guided him towards knowledge.

I first learned about Ricardo Flores Magón on a Oaxacan beach from the [*chilango*] anarcho-punk Luis Cardenas who, decked out in his *Revolución X* t-shirt, urged me to seek out this great "poet, philosopher, and prophet." I unfortunately lost Luis' contact information in the Cleveland Greyhound terminal years ago, so if anyone ever meets him, please tell him I say thanks.

I am also indebted to the numerous scholars who have given their advice and support. My thanks go out to Lillian Castillo-Speed, Ward S. Albro, Colin McLachlan, Richard Swartz, Lyle Brown, Reggie Rodriguez, Juan Gomez Quiñones, Dana Ward, George Salzman, Eric Rauchway, Fermin Rojas, [John Hammett,] Omar Cortes, Chantal Lopez, and Alfonso Torua Cienfuegos.

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In *The Conquest of Bread*, Kropotkin teaches that the revolution must first supply adequate food and shelter before it can progress any further. In that spirit, I would like to thank Wade and Lewis Jones and Hiroko and Koichi Tamano for granting me refuge during the writing of this book.

Most especially, I would like to express my gratitude to two individuals who aided and abetted me throughout this project, supporting me materially, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually through its darkest hours. Without reservation, I can safely state that this volume would not have been possible without the comradeship of Barry Pateman (and the whole gang at the Emma Goldman Papers Project) and my golden palamino Benjamin Ehrenreich.

[Thanks to Ben and to Mona Cowen for giving this work more flow than a diner waitress and more polish than Leon Czogolz.

Salutations to the heart of my land, for bearing with me during the writing of this volume.

This one's for all the kids, yeah, yeah, of every age and in every corner of the globe, first and foremost – probably even fivemost – for all my old TADPOLE/} HNJ/FNB/LPC [cronies. This one's for all the kids who chopped the vegetables and all the kids who served the meal, for all the kids who broke the lock and all the kids who emptied the piss bucket. This one's for everyone who gave me a place to crash when, run ragged by the road, I sought asylum: for Binky, Sarah, Omar, for Simone Levinas and Georges Hansel, for CAF-FAC, for Godolinko Antivarium and ABB, for Count Alexandru, for the Ciceu family, for the Manchin family, for Olga, for Misha Tsovma, for Elias, Gilberto, Pepe, Benjamin, Humberto, Chicate, Oscar, Karla, Gaby, Cesar, y todos los ajenos oaxaqueños.

Going faster miles an hour, I remain

Your pal,

Mitchell Cowen Verter



roadrunner@waste.org]

Breaking^{the} Code

by Dot Matrix

Caveat: these words are occasionally used by people in good faith. Most of the time though, they are used by people who are looking to win arguments and perhaps to bond along certain simplistic lines—not to understand things better or to have different kinds of conversations. Be particularly wary when you hear (or use!) two or more of these words in close proximity to each other.

These terms can be categorized into three themes—action (vs. theory), safety and identity. In practice these themes are closely connected because of the underlying assumptions of the people who most commonly use them. These assumptions are that answers are clear (therefore don't require particularly deep thought or especially complicated challenges to anyone), that the necessary actions might be hard, but they're obvious, that the person who can make a good case for being the most victimized should have the most attention paid to them. The connecting motivation for these themes is guilt—guilt about having power, guilt about not having power (both are sins in this culture), and perhaps a confusion about the difference between privilege and power. If power is seen as the capacity to get things done, to make change, then having it implies that we are responsible for things continuing the way that they are. Not having power both absolves us of that responsibility and also makes us anathema in a society that emphasizes a myth of autonomy and boundless personal (isolated) potential. Privilege is being able to benefit from the way things are, and power is the capacity to change the way things are. They are sometimes connected, but definitely not the same thing.

Abuse – used for a wide range of situations, from blatantly physical, painful, and coercive interactions to the more subtle emotional, political, and social; frequently used as part of a Safe Space argument, to encourage the dangerous people to take the claimant seriously; strongly alludes to extremely polarized power dynamics (of the helpless victim/dastardly villain variety).*

Accountability – blame

Ally – what someone calls themselves (or is called) to express a strong commitment to Someone Else's struggle, when Someone Else is seen to be more authentic than the ally. This status gives vicarious legitimacy to the statements of

the ally, particularly when the ally is confirmed by a representative Someone Else.

Authentic – very common in tacit usage, usually implying that a certain group understands more about how the world works due to a particular social (oppressed) status, leading members of this group (and their allies) to believe that members of this group are more relevant to significant social change than others.

Co, Zee, etc. – gender-neutral pronoun(s) replacing he, she, him, her, an indication that the code user is more hip, more conscientious, more accountable than the non-code user, and more likely to use the words "abusive," "safe space," and "ally." Co is derived from the word comrade.

Community –

1. the basis of validity, the font of Authenticity, from which all organizer and activist legitimacy flows.
2. paradise, an amorphous phenomenon that is all things to all people and represents everything good that we lack; a form of utopia that we could find or create if we tried really hard; frequently sensed in far off places; frequently confused with the practice of liking everyone or having everyone like us.

Empowerment – this word has two mutually exclusive definitions, one of which involves people higher in a hierarchy permitting more control and autonomy to people lower in that hierarchy; the other describes people taking more autonomy and control in their own lives. Frequently used in radical circles with some confusion as to which definition they are applying.

Feeling Silenced – one of a variety of terms referring to feelings as something that *other people* must take care of; this is closely related to Safe Space.

Getting Shit Done – a demand that people stop talking about whatever concerns, questions or disagreements they have (in fact preferably that they pretend to have no concerns, questions, or disagreements) and work harder to get more people involved in whatever the expected task is; classic example of this attitude: "Too much theory is a byproduct of having not enough to do."

Rhetoric to Watch Out For

Having an Impact – see Getting Shit Done.

Justice – refers to the ultimate good (in keeping with its biblical base), involves various implications and assumptions including that it is always obvious what is *just* in any given situation, that the speakers (or at least the important speakers) share the same understanding of what is *just*, and that justice is always relevant. Also implies some level of punishment.

Making a Difference/Making Things Happen – see Getting Shit Done.

Oppression – another catch-all word, means anything from cross-cultural historic tendencies to how your mother treated you, or, more relevantly, how someone is feeling treated badly in a meeting or interaction that is supposed to be Safe Space.*

Safe/Safer Space – usually used by people to blame others for their discomfort, with the expectation that someone else is responsible for them feeling better, especially around huge issues like racism, sexism, and classism; less commonly refers to safety from physical harm; is frequently used in mediated scenarios like meetings, email lists, or online forums.

Speaking Truth (esp. To Power) – engaging in feel-good rhetorical activities.

Struggle – what we are all supposed to engage in at all times (except, perhaps, when we are in Safe Space); apparently an end in itself.

Taking the Next Step – doing the same thing harder, in the hope that more of it will have dramatically different effects. (As Einstein put it, “Insanity is doing the

same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”)

Taking It to the Next/Another Level – see Taking the Next Step.

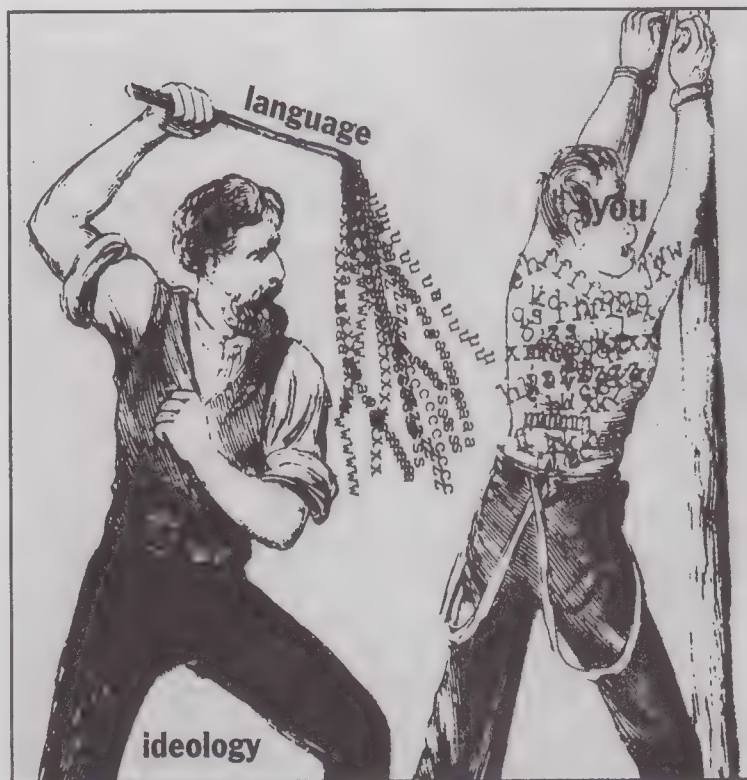
Unity – lack of perceived significant disagreement; perception being much of the point, Unity is used frequently to encourage people to shut up. See Getting Shit Done.

*The point of noting when words have multiple definitions that are widely divergent in their emotional impact, is to point out that using those words calls into play the strongest of the emotional meanings.

Take for example, Clarence Thomas’s use of the word “lynching.” While the word might have had some relevance to him personally—perhaps he felt at that point like his life was about to be over, and that the emotional impact of having to defend his actions was as bad as being kidnapped, tortured and hung—but most people would not see his experience as that. The history of lynching is that it happens to people who are socially disenfranchised. Thomas’s political stance, the reason he was nominated for the Supreme Court in the first place, was because he was denying the relevance of that disenfranchisement. By using that word he benefits from an identity that he has gotten money and power for rejecting, and he calls up emotions and social context that may be a way to understand his feelings (if we give him the benefit of the doubt) but have little to do with understanding the complexities of the external situation.

Rape is another word that describes a physical event, but also is used to describe an emotional impact.

The case for this kind of usage is that it demystifies these words by connecting them to experiences that are more common to all of us. But the stronger impact is to further mystify the experience of the person who is using the word. On some level, someone claiming raped status is claiming to be beyond reproach, an ultimate innocent victim.





Images by Dan Lewis

Ethnic Politics as

by Andy Robinson

The purpose of this article is to offer an account of the importance of ethnicity in the world today, particularly in the global periphery (what is conventionally termed the Third World – the areas further from the core of the global economic system). The theory proposed is that ethnicity is basically a means whereby the network social form which arises among the dispossessed can be recuperated by the global system and by state power. Its pervasiveness is a sign both of the vitality of networked social relations and their insurrectionary potential, and the attempts of states to reduce the danger of such networks.

Horizontal networks and resistance

Discussion of network social forms has suddenly become rather fashionable. Most of the discussion focuses on contemporary high-tech social movements, which rely heavily on computer networks and other communication networks such as mobile phones. Recent studies by the Rand Corporation for instance have emphasised the growing importance of “netwar” – struggles between or against social networks.¹ Theorists sympathetic to social resistance such as Graeme Chesters make similar claims, attributing the ability of anti-capitalist protesters to mobilise effectively without leadership to a “swarm logic” based on distributed network forms of power.² The technological aspect of this view is taken furthest by leftists such as Hardt and Negri, who view the network form of protest movements as an outgrowth of changes in production, of the primacy of “immaterial” labour, and the rise of a new kind of capitalism based on network organisation.³

Where this leftist reading goes wrong, however, is in linking the network form primarily to high-tech or advanced capitalist conditions. It is certainly the case that high-tech protest groups and countercultural movements use network forms, and that technologies allowing network construction are used in this construction. Hackers, open-source programmers, and online protest campaigns are examples of network social forms. It is also the case, however, that similar non-hierarchical horizontal networks arise in almost every situation where people try to mobilise or cooperate outside the framework of the state and of domination. Hunter-gatherers and other indigenous societies, peasant movements, and the urban poor of the shanty-towns and ghettos are among the most obvious examples.

In relation to indigenous societies, Rohrich-Leavitt noted that “gatherer-hunters are generally non-territorial and bilocal; reject group aggression and competition; share their resources freely; value egalitarianism and personal autonomy in the context of group cooperation; and are indulgent and loving with children.”⁴ Where distinct groups exist, they often relate in a networked way – the gift networks of the Trobriand Islands and the extended kinship networks of the Lakota being two examples. One characteristic of such societies is the non-exclusive nature of attachments and affinities, and hence the absence of an overarching identity. Even in the strongest kinds of segmentary lineage systems that come closest to fixed group identity, the existence of extra-familial affinities operates as a restriction on ingroup-outgroup patterns, ensuring some degree of social openness.⁵

Larissa Lomnitz studies survival and mutual aid networks in Latin American shanty-towns, revealing that kinship and neighbourhood relations form an entire informal economy, enabling a layer of excluded people to survive on the periphery of major cities by means of horizontal relations.⁶ Partha Chatterjee shows how the formation of Indian national identity leaves a trail of *fragments* – identities based on class, caste, ethnicity, region, religion, and so on – which provide the basis for entire areas of social life organised beyond the reach of the state, in private associations and homes. The power of the state is thus very much partial, constrained by and always at risk from the subcultures and countercultures emerging from the space beyond its reach.⁷

Integration

Hecht and Simone provide a series of examples from African societies of horizontal social forms which operate invisibly to inflect, undermine, and sometimes overthrow states and formal institutions.

Rather than defining particular structures, the term civil society has come to indicate myriad invisible threads that weave the fabric of African societies together when nothing else appears to be holding them together... [such as] so-called 'popular neighbourhoods'... usually controlled through ethnic, religious, or sectarian affiliation. They produce informal, and often illegal, associations, alliances, strategies and practice, that provide an infrastructure for the community and a measure of functional autonomy.⁸

The uncontrollability and unpredictability of these movements is the source of their strength. In Senegal for instance,

diverse groups are doing more than developing a critical language. They are taking things into their own hands... attempting to reinvent their surroundings... asking for or demanding... taxes to finance their society independently of a larger authority... creating public protests and the occasional riot.⁹

Even in mass societies, everyday relations are often networked and horizontal, and thus implicitly anarchist—a point made clearly by Colin Ward, who goes as far as to portray "apolitical" kinds of social affiliation such as the local music scene in Milton Keynes as anarchist due to their structure, a network of overlapping voluntary associations existing for practical purposes rather than as part of a political principle of domination.¹⁰

Examples could be multiplied, but the case is clear: in most of the world, the integration of the global system of domination requires the powerful to deal with a proliferating, unpredictable, subterranean type of social relation which cannot be reduced to mass culture and which, indeed, often appropriates mass culture for its own ends. It is as a means of dealing with this situation that the importance of ethnicity should be viewed.

Networks versus hierarchies

The importance of the network form is that it allows the construction of relations which do not rely on a hierarchic moment. In order for a hierarchy to be constructed, there needs to be an authority or totality to which all the incorporated people or elements submit—an overarching leader, cause, organisation, idea, or some other spook around which organisation is articulated. This is equally the case for reactive moralities, in which the self-deadening *shoulds* of self-abasing belief are grounded in some moment of authority. Networks, however,

do not require any such moment of authority. They operate like a swarm, without leaders or guiding principles, and they can incorporate people and other beings in ways that bring them together in spite of, or even because of their differences. Deleuze and Guattari contrast the network (or "rhizome") model to the "arborescent" model, structured like a traditional image of a tree (though in fact trees do not follow this model very closely). Whereas in an arborescent model, everything stems from a central trunk, and the branches are given their status by their relation to this trunk, in a network there is no integrating element, only a series of non-reductive and infinitely expansive horizontal connections. For this reason, networks are inherently dangerous to all systems of hierarchical power.

Already in the work of Kropotkin, a dividing-line is drawn between *society*, by which he largely means network logics, and the *state*, referring to hierarchic forms of integration. Kropotkin counterposes the social logic of networks and voluntary associations to the hierarchic political logic of statism, in which people are fragmented and controlled. While networks are bubbling with life, states bring with them death and decay, for the state has to destroy horizontal relations wherever it goes, to arrogate social power to itself and stand in for the community that no longer exists (one of the paradoxes being that the state needs to create the scarcity and competition which then act as the legitimization of its existence). Hence the first act of the state wherever it was established was to break down horizontal networks and pillage the societies they formed.

But while the State was condoning and organizing this pillage, could it respect the institution of the commune as the organ of local affairs? Obviously, it could not. For to admit that some citizens should constitute a federation which takes over some of the functions of the State would have been a contradiction of first principles. The State demands from its subjects a direct, personal submission without intermediaries; it demands equality in slavery; it cannot admit of a 'State within a State'. Thus as soon as the State began to be constituted in the sixteenth century, it sought to destroy all the links which existed among the citizens both in the towns and in the villages.

The state principle is a principle which destroys everything. The irony of a recent British law which defines gathering together in a public place as *anti-social behaviour* would not have been lost on Kropotkin. It stands in a long tradition of state bans and attacks on horizontal association. For statists, people can only relate through the intermediary of the state; to remove this mediation is inherently threatening to it.

Either the State for ever, crushing individual and local life, taking over in all fields of human activity, bringing with it all its wars and domestic struggles for power, its palace revolutions which only replace one tyrant by another, and inevitably at the end of this development there is ... death! Or the destruction of States, and new life starting again in thousands of centres on the principles of the lively initiative of the individual and groups and that of free agreement.¹¹

This thesis was provided with further empirical backing by Clastres, who argues that non-state societies construct mechanisms to prevent the emergence of systematically stratified relations.¹²

State power and the problem of networks

State power requires the suppression of rhizomatic affiliations in order to intensify its own domination.

In western societies this has reached the most extreme forms of social fragmentation and hierarchical reintegration known to history. One sees a situation where the majority are politically integrated in a predominantly symbolic way, often receiving nothing in return, and being managed politically as a Silent Majority through the mass media. This leads Trevor Pateman to argue that the idea of televised elections is misleading – instead one should refer to a “television election,” in which the election itself is a televisual phenomenon, a construct of the mass media.¹³ This is certainly the maximal form of rule which the state has so far found.

This massified society is built historically on a gradual breaking-down of horizontal links and the construction of a massified society where people only relate via categories and formal relations. Thus, the so-called industrial revolution is actually a cumulative progress in alienation, a cumulative increase in regulation and separation to ensure the imposition of social control.¹⁴ Historians writing about successive periods chart this process over time; thus, Craig Calhoun can

write of the destruction of artisan culture in nineteenth-century Britain in very similar terms to those used by Richard Hoggart in discussing the rise of mass culture in the 1960s and the resultant disintegration of locality-based forms of working-class life.¹⁵ The cumulative effect of such corrosion of horizontal affiliation is the construction of a society based on what Sartre terms “seriality” – a relation in which people are interchangeable, mediated by their social position. One reaches the point where Hakim Bey can argue that even to meet with other people outside the contexts of work and family is already a victory for revolutionary energies.¹⁶

Such a situation is, however, unusual. It characterises, at its broadest, western societies, and perhaps even then only a few of the most advanced (in the system’s terms) not having fully affected rural communities or areas such as southern Europe. If mass society is the optimal means by which the system manages social relations, in much of the world it has to cope with a suboptimal situation where social networks remain lively and active.

In most of the world, modern ethnicity is a colonial invention. It apparently derives from some combination of nationalism – a phenomenon dating back three centuries at most, arising among Europeans and settler-colonists, and basically constructing spooks of sameness linked to the rise of industrial technology – with theories of biological superiority derived from discourses of aristocratic class privilege.¹⁷ Colonial administrators and their pet anthropologists and social scientists went to great lengths to categorise people into groups based on ethnicity – the basic function of the colonial census as a device of subject-construction,¹⁸ as well as to construct and promote discourses differentiating the various groups and associating them with some eternal essence.¹⁹ In some cases (such as Vietnam), colonisers actually went to the lengths of inventing an entire written script in order to construct the colonised population as an ethnicity.²⁰

This project continued after decolonisation, and in this regard at least, the postcolonial state is far more a continuation of colonialism than its triumphant adversary. Nominally independent states (often under the watchful eye of imperial gunships and international financial institutions) do a much more extensive job of constructing and enforcing ethno-national categories than their colonial forebears. Thus one finds Algerians, Iranians, and Indians acting much the same way towards the Berbers, Kurds, and Nagas as the French and British once acted towards them. One also finds the subordinate states



performing the function of integration into the world system on their own behalf, saving the imperial powers any need to expend military resources on their compliance. Imperial violence is then reduced to a kind of fire-fighting operation, suppressing those lines of flight which take particular peoples outside of the state system (so-called failed states) or which pit particular states against the dominant powers (so-called rogue states).

Ethnic networks versus affinity networks

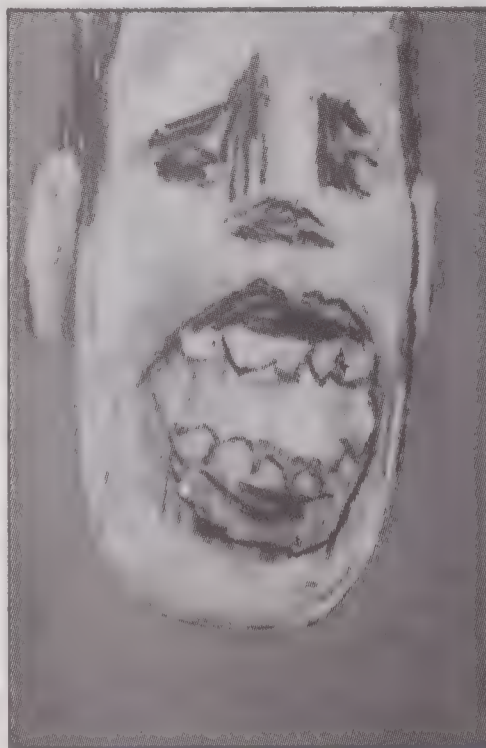
Nevertheless, networks continue to proliferate throughout the global periphery, weakening state power and generating periodic insurrections such as the Argentinazo, the Berber uprising, the struggles in Papua and Bougainville, the repeated overthrows of neoliberal governments in Ecuador and Bolivia, the Zapatista uprising, and a thousand smaller-scale examples undermining the integration of the global system. To contain the revolt, therefore, the system needs to find ways to recuperate the networks which undermine it. From this dilemma arise the many forms of uneven development, in which network-based social forms are incorporated to a sufficient degree to enable exploitation or at least to head off revolt. Capitalists are only able to profitably exploit societies in which a capitalist infrastructure has not yet been constructed, by working with and through existing social relations; often, this means finding ways to incorporate networks. And it is here that ethnic and patronage networks become useful.

The distinction between ethnic/patronage and horizontal/affinity networks is subtle, because the external organisational forms are often quite similar. The difference is that, whereas the latter involves horizontal links and structural openness, the former introduces a hierarchical element which is potentially system-integrative or leaves the network open to integration. In the case of ethnic networks, this hierarchical aspect is an identity category, a strong discourse of Us and Them defining the network and its resources as the exclusive property of an authoritative social group. In patronage networks, this identity-basis is used in combination with a hierarchical situation—an asymmetrical control over resources—to integrate the network around relative privilege, under the control of an elite within the group who hold positions of power and use them to the advantage of the group (and to the disadvantage of outsiders). It is

my contention that patronage networks based on ethnic, religious, and sectarian affiliations are the primary form of system-integration in the global periphery, and that these networks occupy such a role because of their proximity to the affinity-network form which arises among the dispossessed. Ethnicity is thus crucial as the primary recuperative device used by the powerful in the world system to contain the insurrection of the global poor.

The basis of ethnic identity in exclusionary categories—even to the point of a structural primacy of the *other* over the *self*, a dependence of the self's identity on its differentiation from an excluded other—has been widely noted by conflict analysts looking into ethnic conflict.²¹ Anti-colonial activist Franz Fanon put this phenomenon down to what he terms a "narcissism of small differences"—an elevation of superficial difference into something fundamental, used as a way to privilege oneself over those conceived as different—like in the parable where people were killed or freed depending on how they pronounced the word "shibboleth."

The difference between ethnic identities and the kinds of identities that arise in social struggles is that ethnicity typically maps the in-group as both eternal and privileged (or superior to others), whereas socially-located identities react more directly to social relations and conjunctures, without the same degree of mediation by abstract, mythical categories. Thus, Alfredo Bonanno discusses the rise of political Islam as a kind of mapping of the situated categories of oppressor and oppressed onto the ethno-religious categories of Muslim and infidel.



The Islamic distinction between friend and enemy, faithful and unfaithful ("mu'min" and "kafir"), corresponds to the modern one between oppressed and oppressor ("mustad" and "mustakbird"). And it is within the immense theoretical laboratory of militant Islam that disturbing similarities are appearing between civil war and military war, war of peoples to liberate themselves and war of States to impose their own domination. And Muslim fundamentalism finds a good hold where it equates oppressors with the unfaithful and the latter the most advanced, i.e., wealthiest, countries of the West. Poverty has always been short-sighted, and is a bad counsellor... In particular there is a mental closure that comes into contrast with the tradition of civility and

tolerance peculiar to the Muslim world which, is transforming Islam into a theodicy of dominion, a totalitarian regime.²²

Through this mapping, a group which is in fact subordinate fantasises itself in a position of domination and sets about establishing this domination through the microregulation of everyday life and a generalised violence against outsiders. Political Islam is here not unique; Bonanno recognises parallels with certain eastern European nationalisms, and phenomena such as Hindu communalism could be added to the list. The basic device here is a refusal to identify as an excluded, peripheral or minoritarian figure, instead hiding behind a myth in which one identifies as a member of a superior in-group, albeit a dispossessed and unfairly treated one, and attempts to establish this in-group as the new master, overthrowing the existing masters only to replace one domination with another. Its characteristics include an often extreme violence against outsiders—not only members of the dominant group on an undifferentiated basis, but also other out-groups, perceived traitors to the in-group, and people whose personal autonomy puts them outside the fixed essence attributed to the in-group. Islamists for instance have repeatedly targeted groups such as gay men, unveiled women, film-goers, barbers, members of the Ahmadi sect, indigenous Papuans, non-Muslim minorities such as the Balinese Hindus, and members of different branches of Islam, as well as targeting westerners, Christians, and Jews in an undifferentiated way. This generalised violence against out-groups is discursively a practice of domination, even if socially it sometimes correlates with a struggle against real oppressors.

Because of the over-determination of conflicts with active, anarchistic and reactive, totalitarian elements (resistance to oppressors and establishment of domination), peripheral networks can slip between emancipatory and repressive social forms rapidly and almost imperceptibly. An example is the *panchayat* or village commune model which operates in many isolated rural parts of the Indian subcontinent, such as the ungovernable highlands of western Pakistan. These agencies of autonomous local power are the locus of resistance movements such as the revolt against Pakistani state control in Waziristan, and often organise resistance to capitalism and the state, such as the expulsion of Coca Cola from Plachimada, India. However, they are

also the structural basis for localised forms of domination, as in the case of Mukhtar Mai, publicly gang-raped as a punishment for breaching inter-clan barriers and damaging the honour of a privileged group. The form of local autonomy seems to produce emancipatory and dominatory effects depending on the balance of hierarchical and libertarian elements in the local power structures and dominant customs which come into play there.

The distinction between affinity networks and ethnic-based movements is clearer in the case of Manipur. In 2004, a mass social movement against emergency powers shook the Indian occupation. This movement was not based on ethnic categories, but rather, operated across the lines of the vari-

ous social groups. One of its most notable features was the adoption of a fragmented, centreless, localised form of organisation in which social groups, classes, villages, and so on, were able to organise their own autonomous activities. This proliferation of direct action overwhelmed the state machine. One report states that '[t]he entire stretch of the road, from Karong to Hiyangthang was dotted with such barricades, and attempts by the police to clear the road were frustrated due to the sheer number of agitators'²³. With villagers in each area organising autonomously, the state was overwhelmed by action. Parallels with effective anti-capitalist and ecological direct action in the west are very obvious here.

In contrast, ethnic politics in Manipur takes the form of the operation of a number of hierarchical armed opposition groups. Each

of these groups is attached to one or another ethnicity, and their methods take the form of persecution and exclusion of others. Each is fighting for some kind of state in the world system—greater privileges in the distribution of patronage, an independent state under the control of a specific group, or the institutionalisation of one or another set of privileges (such as language criteria) establishing the supremacy of a particular ethnicity. While Meitei groups seek an independent state of Manipur, Naga and Kuki groups fight for separate homelands, and in contrast to the popular autonomy expressed by the social movements, the armed opposition groups operate in an extremely hierarchical way, imposing "moral codes" (such as traditional dress and alcohol prohibition) by means of violence and punishment.²⁴ Armed opposition groups



regularly conduct publicity seeking exercises such as setting fire to drugs, breaking alcohol bottles and destroying video cassettes of Hindi and pornographic movies in a bid to project themselves as protectors of State's culture and moral values.²⁵

This complicity in statism and authoritarianism also leads to conflicts among the groups. "[T]he core ideology of all the insurgent groups moved around their respective distinct ethnic identity." This has led, for instance, to tensions between Naga and Kuki who inhabit the same hill territories, and between Meitei and Pangal (Muslim) groups, sometimes leading to armed clashes and deaths.²⁶

In the context of the land shortages caused by encroachment and the failure to invest in productive jobs, every group views the limited land and jobs as its exclusive right. So each community rewrites its history to claim an indigenous status and the exclusive right over resources in a given area. Ethnic

The pervasiveness of patronage is a sign of the vitality of everyday life.

conflicts are a direct consequence of such hardened ethnic identities and exclusive claims.²⁷

It is notable that there is a large amount of tension between the various armed groups, and between these groups and the social movements. Women's, peace, and human rights groups have organised protests against killings by armed groups and dialogues for peace between different ethnic groups. It is interesting to note in this context that the Indian government seems more inclined to negotiate with armed opposition groups and to rehabilitate their members than it is to engage with the demands of civil-societal groups across the northeast; and also that it seems to encourage ethnic tension, both by pursuing peacemeal negotiations with groups one at a time, and allegedly by setting up certain groups to maintain division.²⁸ In other words, the state is quite happy with the existence of a war system or a system of negotiations with state-like bodies, in which it can use means such as patronage to pursue integration. It is far less happy dealing with movements of a type dissimilar from its own. The same can be said for the Russian state in Chechnya, which has concentrated on eradicating secular militias and covertly strengthening Islamist factions.

Athina Karatzogianni's work on cyberconflict similarly produces an empirically-based distinction between ethno-religious and sociopolitical movements, with the former based on rigid identity categories and exclusions, and the latter

notable for looser kinds of attachments. The latter are better able to use the more horizontal characteristics of information networks, whereas the former are likely to simply repeat the war model they draw from conventional politics. Thus for instance, in relation to the Iraq war, a clear difference can be observed between those movements pursuing ethno-religious and sociopolitical reasons for opposing the war.²⁹

A similar distinction can be made between the kind of messianic Judaism embraced by authors such as Walter Benjamin and Martin Buber, and the type espoused by Zionist Zionists as the basis for constructing an ethnically exclusionary state. European racists found Jews threatening precisely because of their non-inscription in the state system and their resultant outsider status. It was from this position – as bearers of hybridity and as people "out of place" – that the most important radical developments of Jewish thought have arisen. In contrast, with the exception of a small neo-Nazi fringe, the normalisation of Jewish identity through the creation of a state-based ethnicity has effectively defused anti-Semitism among European nationalists and statistes. Rather, there is now a kind of fellow-feeling with Israel as a western-allied power contributing to world-system integration in an unstable region. This rapid turnaround from hostility to commonality can be explained in terms of the system-integrative functions of ethnicity. Contrary to appearances, what European statistes hated about Jews was not anything specific to this particular group, but rather, the fact that a particular group (*any* particular group – one could also refer to the Roma here) could not be inscribed in the dominant system. The moment this exceptional status was eliminated by means of integration into the dominant system of representations, a discourse of antagonism was replaced by a discourse of similarity and equivalence.

One should thus take seriously the paradoxical position of contemporary racism – the view that ethnic others are unobjectionable as such, as long as they are within "their own" cultures or regions. Far from being in contradiction with historical racisms based on superiority and dominance, this principle has in fact always been central to the racist project (as for instance in South African apartheid, British colonial practices of native government, and the practices of the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs). Racism of all kinds rests on identity-fixity, which in turn requires otherness at a distance, as something radically outside. In contrast, the flows of hybridity and interrelation are threatening to such systems of identity-fixity because they overflow the system of management through representation. Of course, this recognised difference is also quite compatible with systematic inequality – confined to their own social or geographical space, distinct groups can then be differentiated in ways which produce social, economic, political and cultural inequalities between them. The entire immigration control system is one big apparatus for the systematic construction

of inequalities through the differentiation of people as belonging to different identity categories.

Patronage power and system-integration

Though ethnicity can express itself in terms of racism and populism, its most characteristic form—especially as regards attempts to manage multicultural societies—is patronage. Patronage networks, usually based on ethnic or quasi-ethnic (e.g. regional or religious) networks and on various forms of nepotism, are the normal form of political control and integration in the overwhelming majority of the world, with the partial exception of certain western societies. This predominance of patronage politics is often pathologised in western-based literatures on development, governmentality, and comparative politics—as for instance in Richard Hodder-Williams' account of the extractive view of politics held by many Africans and its alleged contrasts with a developed form of citizenship.³⁰

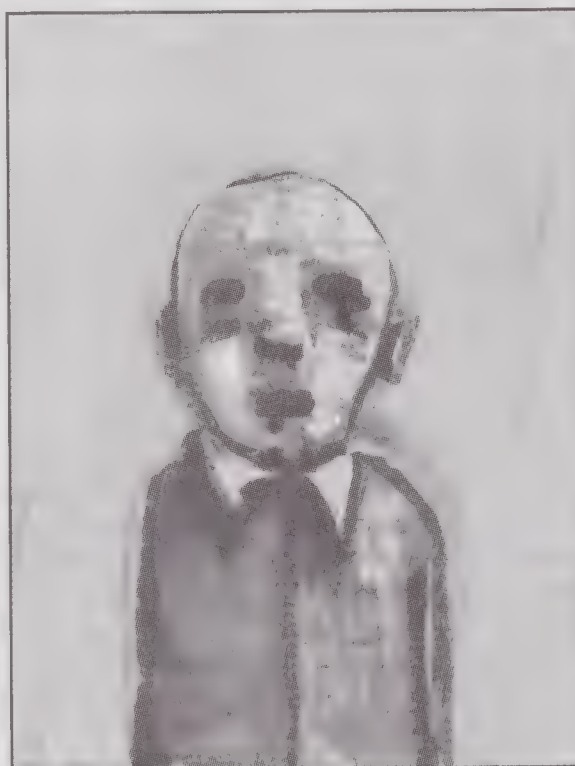
In fact, a reverse view is more appropriate—the pervasiveness of patronage is a sign of the vitality of everyday life, the failure to develop overarching spooks to such a degree as to subordinate populations, and a resultant need to offer something concrete as a guarantee for support. They appear corrupt to those accustomed to western systems, partly because they are different, and partly because they render support for the state conditional on what it delivers. Statists expect an unconditional allegiance from citizens, expect them to choose between agendas or election candidates based on what is good for the state... No wonder they object to this kind of conditionality, where the state actually has to deliver to gain legitimacy. The idea of corruption often gains a quite different meaning within patronage systems themselves. When raised in the slogans of opposition movements, it is typically a protest against the distribution of resources exclusively to regime supporters, a call for inclusion in the patronage apparatus or for its dismantling.³¹

The most obvious form of patronage consists of the unequal distribution of resources to the benefit of groups deemed supportive of the regime. Thus for instance, one often finds funding for humanitarian and development projects directed at sympathetic regions, government jobs distributed by ethnicity or affiliation (a majority of Saddam Hussein's cabinet were from the Tikrit area for example, and nearly all were Sunni Arabs rather than Shiites or Kurds), and contracts and perks given to companies and individuals associated with supportive groups.

Another example is the kind of situation where power is rendered conditional on the performance of rituals of generosity which effectively buy the support of particular groups. Taiwanese candidates are expected to throw lavish festivities during pre-election rallies as a means of winning rural votes. This can be likened in certain respects to the kind of potlatch events which are often a condition for the accept-

ance of social hierarchy in big-man tribal arrangements, and which are often considered to be a form of redistribution and inequality limitation. When incorporated in a modern state system, however, these practices are actually a weak form of system-integration.

There is also a common form of inverse patronage in which violence-prone states distribute their violent actions along patronage lines. During the pogroms which preceded the independence of East Timor for instance, widely portrayed in the western media as wanton violence, there was actually a systematic pattern of targeting districts and villages which had returned pro-independence results in the recent referendum. A similar recent example was "Operation Sweep Out the Trash" in Zimbabwe, which targeted mainly the urban poor—a key constituency for the political opposition. One analyst claims that "a desire to punish the



urban areas for their almost universal tendency since 2000 to vote for the opposition MDC" was a key motivation for the massive purge.³² In fact, from the purges against the (ZAPU-voting) Ndebele on the achievement of independence through to the land redistributions (notoriously biased towards regime loyalists), the Mugabe/ZANU regime has been a paradigmatic case for the use of terror as a means of inverted patronage. Similarly, the *janjaweed* militias in Sudan are typically allowed to plunder the regions in which they operate in return for services rendered to the state.

The important point to note here is that the various forms of patronage are the primary means whereby the world

economic system is kept intact. Without these means of system-integration, the peripheral areas would tend to delink from the system, because the predominant horizontal forms of coordination provide little basis for integration into the system. It is crucial, however, to bear in mind the limits of delinking as previously conceived by world systems theorists such as Andre Gunder Frank and Samir Amin.³³ These approaches tend to emphasise delinking peripheral states from the world system. In practice, however, delinked states are just as likely to pursue system-integrative strategies of patronage and identity-formation as those which are fully integrated into the world system. So-called anti-imperialist regimes such as Zimbabwe, Sudan, and Iran are among the most extensive users of ethnic patronage and identity-based exclusion. And the State Communist regimes such as North Korea and Maoist China developed their own peculiar brand of patronage politics, classifying people into relatively privileged and excluded groups based on the class origins of their ancestors, in effect reconstructing ethnic schemas on the basis of class.

privileged individuals within each
excluded group whose purpose is to
manage the group...

Multiculturalism as ethnic patronage

The form which ethnic integration takes in western societies is the community leader phenomenon, also known as multiculturalism. Basically, this phenomenon operates by creating a stratum of privileged individuals within each disenfranchised or excluded group, whose purpose is to socially manage the group, to channel its frustrations into a positive attachment to an ethnic category, and to defuse these frustrations by means of the negotiation of this group's constructed identity within the system.

The history of this strategy can be traced back to the British Empire, which often used local leaders (religious figures, chiefs, kings, etc.) in this kind of way—a strategy which was absolutely crucial to the management of a wide-ranging empire given the small number of settlers and administrators.³⁴ It was also used in nineteenth-century Italy, where it took the peculiar form known as *trasformismo*—the beheading of social movements through the parliamentary or administrative incorporation of movement leaders or figureheads. It reached something akin to its modern form in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, which were the world's first multicultural states. Each "nationality" was permitted its own local party structure, representative institutions, and so on—but its representatives, much like today's commu-

nity leaders, were appointed from within the party-state apparatus, usually by the central leadership, as a means of integrating the various "national" areas. It reached its current form as a response to social crises in countries such as America, Britain, Canada, and Australia—as a strategy for defusing the increasingly militant struggles of black people, migrant populations, and indigenous peoples. Though often counterposed to the monocultural models of ethnic-majority populism, it is in fact structurally similar, relying on a similar model of social integration through ethnic categories.

A similar strategy has been used to contain prison revolt. When the black consciousness movement first reached prisons, the resulting assertiveness of black prisoners was welcomed by the entire prison population, as something that altered the balance of power between prisoners and screws and that won important gains for prisoners. To undermine this solidarity, screws started playing favourites—giving benefits to black prisoners only, to create resentment from other prisoners, or rewarding other groups for being compliant. In this way, one can see the origins of the ethnic prison gangs which have since come into existence. These gangs can be seen as at least partly a result of divide-and-rule strategies which used ethnicity to undermine resistance.

When network social forms have outflanked control apparatuses, ethnicity can be used by states and other dominant groups in order to re-establish control. The effects of this become very clear in contexts where the state uses pogroms to defuse anti-state unrest. The Indonesian financial crisis of 1997 offers an especially clear example—state forces suppressed popular anti-capitalist, anti-state and anti-dictatorship protests, but encouraged and collaborated with pogroms against the Chinese population of Indonesia. These pogroms served as a way to channel social discontent in a way which was harmless for the state and capitalism. This kind of pogrom may be uncommon in Indonesia, but the channelling of frustrations onto ethnic groups deployed socially as intermediaries is very common—not only are the Chinese frequently exploited in this way throughout Southeast Asia, but colonial regimes frequently used ethnic minorities (the Tutsi, the Tamils) or migrant communities (such as South Asians in East Africa) in the same way, and one could even interpret European anti-Semitism along these lines. In addition, ethnic politics based on pogroms and constant conflict is a normal part of capitalist management in certain parts of Nigeria (eg. Kaduna), Indonesia (eg. Ambon) and India (eg. Gujarat). There are also similarities with the situation in Sydney, where a racist pogrom—tolerated, encouraged, and incited by state agents—followed two years of mass unrest against the state. The boundary between rigid ethnic identities and loose affiliations in revolt against oppressors is a slim one,

and one which the socially excluded cross over on a regular basis; the emotional and psychological reactions generated by social and economic marginality and exclusion seem to be equally open to either kind of articulation. This fluidity is something the state exploits in order to prevent the kinds of revolts which really threaten its power.

A similar observation could be made regarding events in Britain and France in November 2005. In France, the absence of multiculturalist integration left open the possibility of revolts which crossed boundaries of ethnicity and religion, and which were directed primarily against the state. The result was a massive urban insurrection organised on a network basis against the poor, directed primarily at crackdown culture and the repressive apparatuses of the state and capitalism. There was also unrest in Lozells, Birmingham, at around the same time – an area which hosted a large anti-state uprising in the mid-1980s. In this case, however, the discontent – while clearly sparked by exclusion, poverty, and social alienation – was channelled in directions which were largely harmless to the state. Instead of taking the form of an uprising against the police, the revolt took the form of communal fighting between young men of Asian and African origin, on the basis of firm identifications with specific ethnic categories. This is the harvest the state has reaped for its strategy of multiculturalist integration – the use of ethnically targeted state patronage to solidify group identities, and the use of populism to channel concerns arising from social exclusion and economic precarity into ethnic categories.

Similar strategies have been used in occupied Iraq as part of the strategy to contain resistance to the occupation. The Iraqi elections were constructed in such a way as to encourage the formation of ethnic political blocs and their competition for state resources. Ethnic and sectarian militias have been incorporated into local state apparatuses and allowed to take control of local governmental machineries in return for collaboration. These militias have then been deployed against other ethnic groups – Shiite militias in al-Qaim, Kurds in Fallujah – to foment divisions and create a basis for colonial power in the internal structures of Iraqi society. American troops forge alliances with local tribes, using existing rivalries to undermine opposition

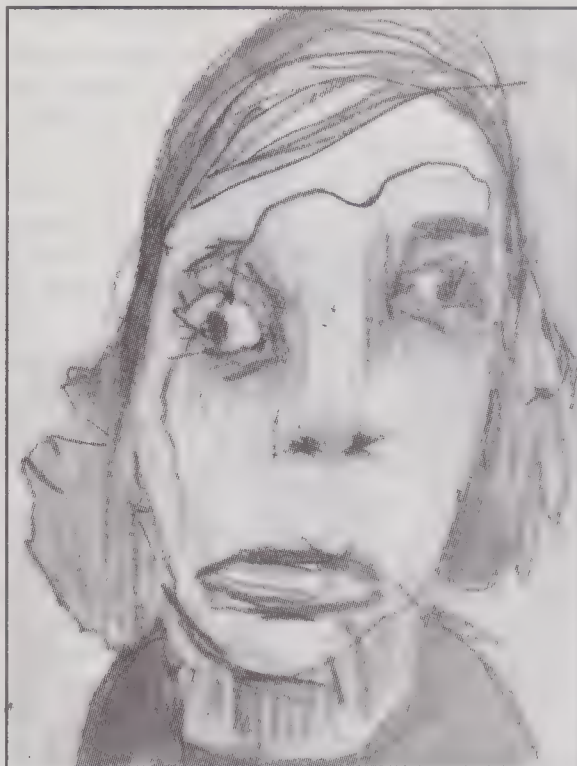
militias.³⁵ An American military leader adopts the dress, mannerisms and customs of village sheikhs in an attempt to gain influence.³⁶ Ethnic militias attract recruits with payment and perks,³⁷ while the British army effectively hands over southern towns to the Mahdi and Badr militias.³⁸ Iraq's interior ministry, controlled by the Shiite SCIRI faction, refuses to deploy western-trained troops, instead delivering positions to its own loyalists.³⁹ Similarly in Afghanistan, the occupying forces rely on local militias to maintain control. In both cases, it is only the use of local ethnic patronage networks that has stood between the occupier and instant collapse. The blatant use of such networks in these cases of sharpened conflict is a clear indication of their crucial function they play in the integration of systemic power at the periphery.

Conclusion: ethnicity as social control

So what is the trick which allows patronage politics to integrate networks? The answer lies in the kind of categories it uses. Patronage networks are similar to affinity networks in adopting a network organisational form; but they differ in that the integration of the network is based not on degrees of affinity nor on particular projects, but rather, on belonging to a rigid category. Most often, this category is ethnic, although it can also be religious, regional, class-based, and so on. It involves the endorsement of an idea – a Stirnerian spook – which holds the network together and which sets up a rigid borderline between the inside and outside of the network.

The trick performed by state strategists is to alter the balance between active and reactive attachments within a network, turning categories of affiliation into rigid categories and active, expansive association for practical, ludic, or survival purposes into reactive, exclusive, closed association for purposes of competition, domination, and patronage. The two mutually exclusive logics – of affinity and ethnicity – are usually already operative within social networks of the dispossessed; whereas one of them provides the seed of insurrection which renders these networks disruptive of state power, the other is the Trojan horse through which the state minimises the threat which the networks pose.

Basically it is a particular, sophisticated form of state-led recuperation. Examining *trasformismo* in Italy, Gramsci



argued that this kind of strategy was a way of creating social passivity by preventing the emergence of antagonistic forces. It was a means of passive revolution, which is to say, of Hegelianism in the bad sense – the synthesis of each antagonistic agent into the existing system, so that a radical break could never emerge. This account prefigures the later Situationist theory of recuperation, but the two phenomena are subtly distinct – whereas recuperation usually happens by means of symbolism (such as the commercial appropriation of the cultural symbols of dissident movements), *trasformismo* is more of an organisational phenomenon, integrating oppositional movements through the incorporation or creation of a malleable leadership. But the function is basically the same – bringing a flow which exceeds the system back into the system's remit, by means of reinscribing it in the system's categories.

In Deleuze and Guattari's work, this process is viewed as *axiomatisation*.

The capitalist system is axiomatic in the sense of relying on quantification as a means of establishing equivalence between diverse phenomena. Thus, many



different subcultures are integrated in capitalism by means of the addition of new axioms, of particular niche markets, or new kinds of commodities. Capitalism was able to digest the Russian Revolution only by continually adding new axioms to the old ones: an axiom for the working class, for the unions, and so on. But it is always prepared to add more axioms... it has a peculiar passion for such things that leaves the essential unchanged.⁴⁰

Ethnic politics is one example of this kind of phenomenon – the addition of axioms in order to include particular populations and particular social networks in the capitalist world system.

The crucial point about ethnicity is its establishment of identity-fixity. The kinds of affinity theorised by Bonanno, Stirner, Kropotkin, Ward, Deleuze, and the rest are based on types of affiliation which are immediately actual. In contrast, affiliations aroused by ethnic categories are mediated by a fixed representation which states that people belong to a particular social group on the basis of some essential characteristic or other. Thus networks are fixed and closed, rather than fluid and open. It should be viewed as a reactive kind of attachment in the Nietzschean sense – an attachment to identity-categories based on an emphasis on certain differences as exclusive, what Fanon terms a “narcissism of minor differences;” and an establishment of personal or group identity based on a primary exclusion, on an insistence that a particular Us-Them relation is primary in defining one's being. Against this, anarchist networks insist on the primacy of becoming or existence over being, the active construction of categories, and the irreducibility of people, groups, and relations to any imposed representational categories. As such, they are outgrowths of active desire. This difference, however, is a difference in the relation between self and group – not necessarily a difference in the structure of the group itself. To an outside observer, the two kinds of networks can look very much alike.

The crucial political point here is that the network form is necessary but not sufficient to liberation from statism and hierarchy. The lesson of ethnicity for anarchists is that social networks can be recuperated into hierarchic social forms by means of categories which operate primarily at an ideological or psychological level. In this way, a preponderance of social networks (as opposed to hierarchies or mass-society forms) can be rendered compatible with certain forms of state control and systemic integration. The question is not simply one of building networks of resistance among the excluded and oppressed. There is also a need to address and overcome the cops-in-heads, the categories

and spooks that tie people into hierarchical identities.

¹E.g. John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *Swarming and the Future of Conflict* (RAND Corporation, 2001).

²Graeme Chesters, *Another World is Possible: Social Movements Confronting Capital and the State* (London: Pluto 2006).

³Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude* (Harmondsworth: Penguin 2004), 54-8, 145-8.

⁴Cited in John Zerzan, *Future Primitive* <http://www.insurgentdesire.org.uk/futureprim.htm>

⁵Harold Barclay, "Anthropology and Anarchism," *The Raven* 18 (5:2), April-June 1992, p. 160.

⁶Larissa Lomnitz, *Networks and Marginality: Life in a Mexican Shantytown* (New York: Academic Press 1977)

⁷Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

⁸Simon Hecht and Maligalim Simone, *Invisible Governance: The Art of African Micropolitics* (New York: Autonomedia 1994), 14-15.

⁹Hecht and Simone, p. 104.

¹⁰Colin Ward, "Anarchy in Milton Keynes," *The Raven* 18 (5:2), April-June 1992, 116-31.

¹¹Peter Kropotkin, *The State: Its Historic Role* (1897), <http://www.panarchy.org/kropotkin/1897.state.html>

¹²Pierre Clastres, *Society Against the State* (New York: Zone, 1989).

¹³Trevor Pateman, *Television and the 1974 General Election*, <http://www.selected-works.co.uk/television1974.html>

¹⁴Leopold Roc, "Industrial Domestication: Industry as the Origins of Modern Domination," <http://www.eco-action.org/dt/inddom.html>

¹⁵Craig Calhoun, *The Question of Class Struggle: The Social Foundations of Popular Radicalism during the Industrial Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957).

¹⁶Hakim Bey, "Immediatism vs Capitalism," http://www.left-bank.org/bey/imm_cap.htm

¹⁷See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983); Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). While these texts are the main rivals in academic discussions of nationalism, it is worth noting that they agree on the basic points – that nationalism first came into existence about three centuries ago, that it was a form of state-integration based on reinterpreting history, that its basic contours are linked to industrialism and that its spread to the majority of the world was carried out by colonialism. Where they differ is on the reason for its emergence – while Hobsbawm and Ranger emphasise political machinations, Anderson stresses changes in perspective resulting from the new industrial landscape.

¹⁸Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 164-5.

¹⁹See Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin 1995), especially chapter 1. "No merely asserted generality is denied the dignity of truth; no theoretical list of Oriental attributes is without application to the behavior of Orientals in the real world" (49).

²⁰Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 128.

²¹E.g. Vivienne Jabri, *Conflict Analysis Reconsidered* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); Ali Khan, *The Extinction of Nation States: A*

world without borders (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1996); David Campbell, "Violence, Justice and Identity in the Bosnian Conflict," in *Sovereignty and Subjectivity*, ed. Jenny Edkins, Nalini Persram and Véronique Pin-Fat (Boulder: Lynne Piener, 1999), 21-37.

²²Alfredo Bonanno, "For an Anti-Authoritarian Insurrectionalist International," http://www.geocities.com/kk_abacus/iaaa/insurint.html

²³"Pitch of protest hightens after partial lift," Imphal Free Press, 14 Aug.

²⁴Routray, Bibhu Prasad (2005), "Manipur: Rampaging Militants, Mute State," SOUTH ASIA INTELLIGENCE REVIEW Volume 3, No. 26, January 10, 2005 http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/sair/Archives/3_26.htm

²⁵Routray, "Manipur..."

²⁶Upadhyay, R (2004), "Manipur – in a strange whirlpool of cross-current insurgency," South Asia Analysis Group <http://www.saag.org/papers13/paper1210.html>

²⁷Fernandez, Walter, "Limits of Law and Order Approach to the North-East," EPW Commentary, Nov 16 2004

²⁸Fernandez, "Limits of Law and Order."

²⁹Athina Karatzogianni, *The Politics of Cyberconflict*, (London: Routledge 2006).

³⁰Richard Hodder-Williams, *An Introduction to the Politics of Tropical Africa* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1984).

³¹The possible argument that patronage or extractive politics is an outgrowth of poverty, while not entirely unfounded, ignores that these practices also extend to wealthy sections of the population and to relations between the state and corporations.

³²Deborah Potts, "Restoring Order? Operation Murambatsvina and the Urban Crisis in Zimbabwe," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 32, Number 2, June 2006.

³³Samir Amin, *Delinking: Towards a Polycentric World* (New York: Zed, 1990).

³⁴John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonization: Retreat from Empire in the Post-war World* (London: MacMillan 1988).

³⁵Hannah Allam and Mohammed al Dulaimy, "Marine-led Campaign Killed Friends and Foes, Iraqi Leaders Say," <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines05/0517-01.htm>

³⁶Antonio Castaneda, "Iraq citizens deem U.S. soldier as sheik," <http://www.mlive.com/newsflash/international/index.ssf?/base/international-25/1122826992255580.xml&storylist=international>

³⁷Daniel McGrory, "Militias steal new recruits with better pay and perks," <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7374-2159349,00.html>

³⁸Juan Cole, "British To Withdraw from Maysan, Muthanna," <http://www.juancole.com/2006/05/british-to-withdraw-from-maysan.htm>

³⁹"Iraq's Interior Ministry Refuses to Deploy US-Trained Police," *GI Special* 4D5.

⁴⁰Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (London: Athlone 1984), 253.



Anarchist Media Review

Reviews this issue are by Aragorn! [A!], Dot Matrix [DM], L.D. Hobson [LD] and Matt Lucas [ML].

Anarchy does exchanges with all other anarchist and anti-state, anti-capitalist periodicals.

We will try to review all such periodicals received.

Abolishing the Borders
from **Below: Anarchist Journal**
from **Eastern Europe #25**, July
2006
\$3, 48 pages
abolishingbb_subs@riseup.net

This journal has a hard time making it off that other continent but is informative when it gets here. Composed almost entirely of activist reports, it's the breadth of the area covered, as well as the paucity of information from that part of the world (at least in my circles) that makes this journal especially worth seeking out. With a majority of articles written in broken English, including references to things I haven't heard of (what is the WI?), it's hard to tell if the mostly unsophisticated analysis is a result of understanding or language. There seems to be a very wide range of political understanding, from straight up nonprofit/social service style attempted reforms of homeless shelters, to Laure Akai's charmingly up-front interview of a Vietnamese-Polish friend on the state of the situation in Poland.

This particular issue is about discrimination, and gives us information about the Rroma (don't call them gypsies), homophobia (responses to gay pride from Moscow to Warsaw), homelessness, and a survey of Polish nationalist groups. Also includes pieces on planning for G8 in St. Petersburg, anti-eviction actions in Kazakhstan, fascism in the Czech Republic, many short notices about various worker's struggles, and a short bio of Alexander Atabekian.

There is something to be said

for a journal that reports on what people are doing and dealing with, and letting the reader determine for herself what that says about the assumptions and questions that underlie these actions. [DM]

Against Prisons

By Catherine Baker
Translated by Doug Imrie & Michael William
Venomous Butterfly
PMB 1237
Portland OR 97204
19 pages, \$1

This short abolitionist essay argues for the destruction of prisons, because of the bad effects of confinement on individuals, and because prisons are based on social judgment and law, which negate people's individuality. "Long prison sentences....correspond perfectly to a collective desire to murder. We eliminate bothersome people, like any crook would." Aside from the fact that crooks are not necessarily murderers, and hence aren't eliminating people, this is a simplistic analysis, but still interesting.

This question of collective judgment is the one most vexing to the author, who believes that judgment is only acceptable when it is from individual to individual. Universal judgments, including trials, objectify the people involved on both sides of the conflict and deny everyone's unique qualities. Law is defined as "A mandatory rule impose on man from the outside." It is precisely because laws come from an outside source, that these abolitionists are adamantly against

them, believing that conflicts should be based on specific situations, rather than standards that attempt to be all-encompassing. The very idea that a policy should exist for deciding the fate of criminals, the zine states, "is a criminal question, a question that perpetuates the trap we want to avoid falling into, the trap that consists of perpetually negating the individual... we think there is only one solution: to stop wanting to socialize people." This essay is passionate about the individual's side of this discussion, while being vague about how to deal with the social aspect of all conflict. What is especially murky in their pro-individualistic stance is how they define or value society and socialization. [ML]

Behind The Barricades:

Best of David Rovics

AK Press
674-A 23rd, St.
Oakland, CA
CD, \$12

If you like folk music, Rovics' songs are full of catchy choruses, intricate acoustic rhythms and crowd pleasing sing-alongs. That said, I have mixed feelings about the lyrics. Several other reviews I read touted his songs as "hard-hitting." But, I kept re-reading the lyric sheet, and kept finding contradictory political sentiments: alternately inflammatory, conciliatory, or cute in a cheesy leftist sort of way.

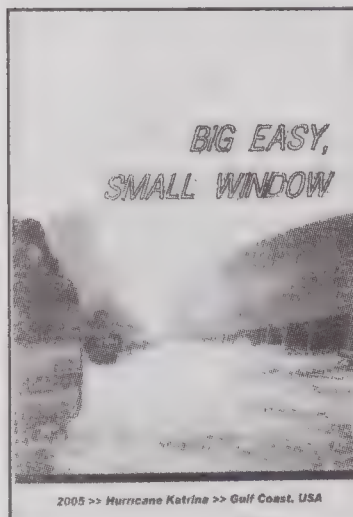
For instance, there is a song about smashing the state (anarchist, engaging, and inspiring),

but there is also a song about being Irish and fighting for the Mexican state... which is still a state last time I checked. I also have some trepidation about him singing as if he were a young Palestinian woman expressing her feelings as a suicide bomber. Did he even know this woman? But maybe I'm just behind the times and it's no longer creepy for men to talk for women. On his website you can read notes Rovics wrote about the inspirations for his songs. About "I Wanna Go Home" he writes, "Some people think politics are complicated, but I think they're usually pretty simple. It usually boils down to the haves and the have-nots. The rich and the poor, the home-full and the home-less, the conquerors and the refugees." This sentiment is perhaps most revealing of the ideology behind his music; whoever is the economic underdog is who he champions, it really doesn't matter if they are statist, religious fundamentalists, or third world nationalists.

From this mix of statements, it was difficult to decipher Rovics' true politics. Reformist liberal? Anarchist? Or perhaps it's all a clever marketing scheme to lure in reformists and expose them to a sprinkle of anarchist sentiment? This might be overly generous, but I just can't seem to hate it altogether. In his own words, he sings "Songs of Social Significance," and it does seem like he will write about anyone or anything, as long as they are down-trodden in the public eye.

David travels the world sharing his music and passing on his ideas, which I wish were more consistent.

You can get all his merchandise on his website, comment on his lyrics, and get events e-mails so you can follow him around the world via the web. In short: moments of musical inspiration mixed with some politically unpredictable lyrics. [LD]



Big Easy, Small Window
One Thousand Emotions POB
63333
St. Louis, MO 63163
52 pages, no price listed

This is an anarchist analysis of Hurricane Katrina. The bulk of this pamphlet is comprised of pull quotes from major newspapers, blog entries, and first person accounts of New Orleans. The perspective represented in the collection of quotations is insurrectionary: Looting occurred, the state was equally incompetent and brutal, mutual aid happened, and the recovery will benefit capital before people. These are quotations that you may have already seen and that will continue to be reused for years to come (to punctuate any number of contradictory perspectives). After the quotes is a short essay "Shouting at Deaf Ears" that concludes "Katrina ought to have taught us that waiting for 'the authorities' to act is suicide. Left

to their own devices, our rulers will squash us again and again to mold the society they want. Now we must choose to act for ourselves and turn our backs to the systems of power and brutality that control our world." The rhetoric of "acting for ourselves" isn't nearly as sexy in practice as it sounds in crisis-fueled exhortations: acting for ourselves frequently doesn't look pretty, it looks mundane. [A!]

The Civil War in Venezuela
RAAN - redanarchist.net
92 pages, no price listed

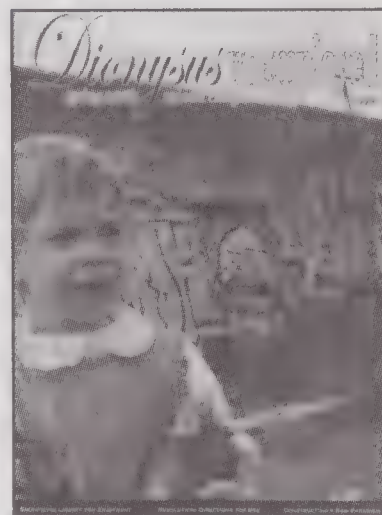
This pamphlet includes the full version of the essay about Venezuela that is excerpted in this issue's Recent Events section. Within are an interesting set of stories about the context of Venezuela prior to the Chavez presidency, the cult of personality around Chavez, and details of what exactly is revolutionary, and not, about the current Venezuela situation. The author of the article is a member of RAAN (the Red & Anarchist Action Network) and framed his time in Venezuela as being as a representative of RAAN. This gives RAAN quite a bit of credit, since RAAN alleges to be "an informal network of like-minded individuals" rather than a group that has the resources to send someone to South America. The RAAN political analysis of Venezuela is not the reason why this booklet is valuable. The detailed, first-person perspective on what radicals are doing in Venezuela and what exactly defines "Socialismo Bolivariano," is what is worthwhile about it. The RAAN analysis touches all the sweet spots of a self-respecting anti-authoritarian but not for long enough to feel satisfied or respected in the morning. [A!]

Curious About Emergence?
Curious George Brigade
12 pages, no price listed

This is a pamphlet from the Curious George Brigade in their "Curious about..." series where they point to ideas that inspire them. This one is about Emergence and is subtitled "Anarchy, Ants, and Artificial Intelligence: What Emergence has to offer the Revolutionist" where emergence is offered as yet another term for the radical set. As is de rigueur for contemporary politics emergence isn't a new theory, or ideology, but "reveal(s) how things organize themselves." At the same time "(E)mergence provides a unique approach for understanding why certain anarchist projects succeed while others degenerate into entropy." Big words for a 3,000 word essay. In actuality emergence is the study of complex pattern creation using simple rules. It is used to describe properties in nature and culture. A classic natural example of emergence is color. Elementary particles that comprise matter do not have color, it is only when they are arranged, absorb and emit specific wavelengths of light that they have color. An example in culture would be the stock market, where individual brokers only have agency over a small number of companies and interact with others through the restriction of the market's regulatory agencies. As you can imagine the CGB extrapolate this concept far beyond its abilities in hopes that anarchists can use it. Let's call it pop philosophy. [A!]

Dionysus Unemployed
Spring 2006
66 pages, no price listed
dionysusunemployed.net

The second issue of *Dionysus*



Unemployed, a magazine written from a radical left position, is filled with boring polemics against the current order of things. These polemics unquestionably argue from a pro-democratic stance and invoke the spirit of Lenin, the Situationists, Lacan, and Nietzsche.

One of the more interesting (in that it is so rarely used) analyses they use is the Lacan triad in which "... ideology, fantasy, and private enjoyment functions on the Imaginary; law, politics, language, and social constructs function on the Symbolic; and raw materials, human resources and built capital functions on the Real..." (p.16) One of the better articles is a probably fictional piece called "A Conversation with an Aspiring Terrorist," in which two ideological idealists argue about changing the western world. The so-called terrorist advocates slaughtering innocent westerners for their civilization's acts toward the rest of the world. The story is primarily interesting due to the tension between the so-called terrorist and the more liberal minded author; however it is implausible that this conversation would happen as a casual chat between strangers over a pint of beer in an Irish pub.

While the quotations by the Situationist International and Ni-

etzsche are evocative, the magazine fails to back them up with any deep understanding of these authors.

In short, if one is looking to warm oneself with the fires of mediocrity this magazine could work. [ML]

Earth First! Journal
July/August 2006
 POB 3023
 Tucson AZ 85702
 50 pages, \$4.50

The Earth First! Journal is a predictable publication that I feel a great deal more connection to after attending the yearly EF! Rendezvous in Southern Appalachia. Every year at the rondo the journal has a series of meetings where they talk about the magazine and its role in the movement, and then garner input from the attendees. Hearing the editors discuss their process and realizing how useful the journal is in the continuity of the EF! scene was very interesting. From the outside, the somewhat lifeless series of report backs and partial analysis is depressing and predictable. From within it is clear that this is a way that new people can participate in Earth First! and understand the continuity of the movement.

This issue is rich in local news (Appalachia, Borders, Boston, Six Nations, Zapatistas, Oregon's Free Geek, etc) and some interesting analysis. Of particular note is Lyn Highway's response to Michael Donnelly on the matter of John Trudell, John Graham, and the memory (and honor) of Anna Mae Pictou-Aquash. This is a complicated saga about what exactly support looks like within our community and is treated appropriately and respectfully by Lyn. [A!]

Emotional Poverty #3
<http://redanarchist.org>
 20 pages, donation

When I was a young punk rocker there was a kid who I chased away from my circle of friends. He was a recent émigré from metal to punk and was more embarrassing than I was capable of dealing with at the time. Along with a crew of his fellow social inepts he went on to create a 'new' kind of rebellious movement called "rogue rock" that was a cross between Billy Idol's fashion and skateboarding. The only other thing I can distinctly remember about the rogue rockers was their handshake. They would curl up their fingers and proclaim "rigor mortis" (with a spooky voice) as they shook hands.

RAAN (Red & Anarchist Action Network) are modern day rogue rockers and this is "The Crewcial Journal of Red & Anarchist Street Culture." Not satisfied with the tired old traditions of anarchism and communism, RAAN is "An immense dialogue in direct action, it is also its own culture, spawning its own symbols, praxis, vocabulary, and collective image outside of the predetermined..." While most of the rhetoric and content seem to take themselves quite seriously I will attempt to look past that to what appears to be the more appealing tongue-in-cheek attitude. There are quite a few cleverly de-tourned line drawings. There is a lengthy section on *parkour* (the discipline of passing obstacles quickly and efficiently—also called free running), which may be RAAN's most enduring legacy to radicals, with a cute line drawing of a future RAAN PK training ground. There are a few rants, one against Lenin, another on anarcho-nihilism, that fill out this publication. [A!]

Got the Hollow Points for the Snitches
 32 pages, no price listed

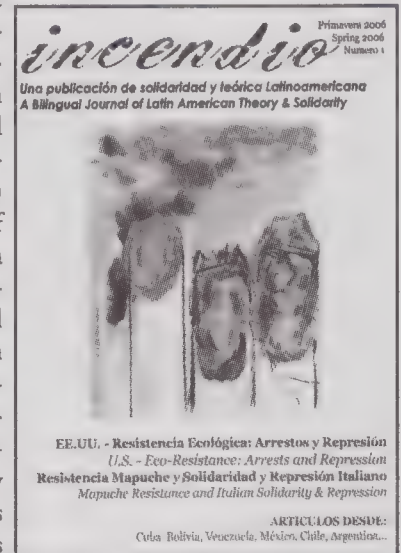
You would be hard pressed to find a more simplistic, sensational, and self-destructive publication for radicals than this one. The subtitle says it all "The Persistence of Snitch Culture in Communities of Resistance and How to Defeat It" with the title clearly describing what defeating snitch culture is going to look like. Snitch Culture seems to be defined simply as the action of individuals to inform on their (former) comrades. How the actions of individuals can be defined as a culture is through the imaginative extrapolation of the general attitude of permissiveness in radical circles towards individuals. Apparently this permissiveness towards egregious individuals is a kind of revolutionary failure. The prevalence of this non-existent culture provides an excuse to spend half the zine listing people's names, pictures, and recent email and phone numbers in a "Snitch Gallery" (with accompanying crosshairs to reinforce the point) that includes a few of the victims of the Green Scare. On some level this wouldn't be so bad if it didn't represent the extent of interest people seem to have in the state's repression of our comrades. This is the Jerry Springer Show of the prisoner support movement. [A!]

Impact Press #60
 PMB 361, 10151 University Blvd.
 Orlando FL, 32817
 48 pages, \$3

This is Impact Press' last issue and good riddance. The cover is a photoshopped montage blending MLK and Che. 'Nuff said. [A!]

Incendio
 Spring 2006, #1
 POBox 993
 Santa Cruz, CA 95061
 68 pages, \$.2

Incendio's goals are big. Inspired by *Abolishing Borders from Below* (reviewed this issue) and *Solidarity South Pacific* (a publication from



the UK), the stated goal is to connect "anarchists in English/Spanish speaking countries throughout the world to anarchist, indigenous, ecological, and social struggles occurring throughout Latin America." This ambitious vision is made more engaging by the inclusion of writers who identify as insurrectionary (vaguely defined, but still...).

The articles are spotty, from report backs of activist events (report backs that are not accounts of what actually happened, but merely descriptions that could have been lifted from a program guide), to an interesting piece responding to an online Cuba-friendly article to a purely informational article on development and environmental problems along the US/Mexico border. The final piece, "Them or Us," identifies accusations levied

against insurrectionists, and then sort of refutes them, except that the accusations are against characteristics that some of us would embrace ("nihilist," "immoral," etc.), leading to the question, "Whose insurrection?"

A significant portion of this first issue is taken up with the Green Scare defendants, somewhat redundant for people around here at this point, but perhaps not for the readership in Latin America. And therein lies an issue that remains to be resolved. How does a single journal cover issues relevant and appropriate to such a huge area.

This journal, for all its unassuming production values, is a fine start, at a reasonable price, to filling an unfortunate gap. May it prosper. [DM]

Life as Totality

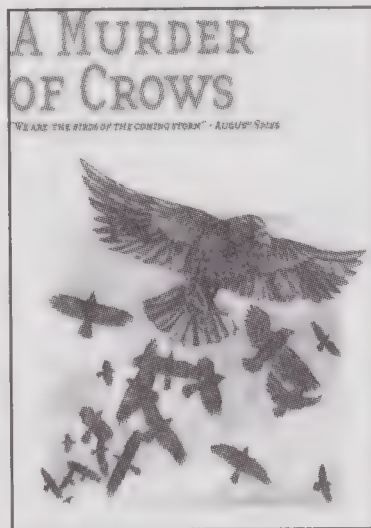
Venomous Butterfly Publications

818 SW 3rd Ave., PMB 1237
Portland, OR 97204
28 pages, \$2

These are three short essays by Wolfi Landstrieher. "Life as Totality" inverts the negative theoretical concept of "the totality." A term used by Adorno and Zerzan to refer to a kind of holism by which society can be understood, Wolfi uses the words to describe positively a way to understand the individual. "On Projectuality" is another attempt by Wolfi to explain the concept of projectuality, a term that red anarchists would call lifestyle and every other anarchist would call living life anarchistically. The essay is a useful reframing of an old canard. Finally the essay titled "Play Fiercely! Our Lives Are at Stake!" subverts the question of strategy into a discussion of the ethics of playing games.

Wolfi's introduction merits

special attention. In it he laments a bygone era within the anarchist milieu when love, poetry, and passion inhabited the scene instead of the desperation, militancy, and dogma that seems to dominate today. Setting aside my suspicion that his own youth and inexperience may have placed stars in his eyes I absolutely agree with his central point. Those who desire another world are never going to be more hard, sharp, or militant than the system that currently dominates. We do have the ability to live creatively and expansively without moralistic restraint



A Murder of Crows #1

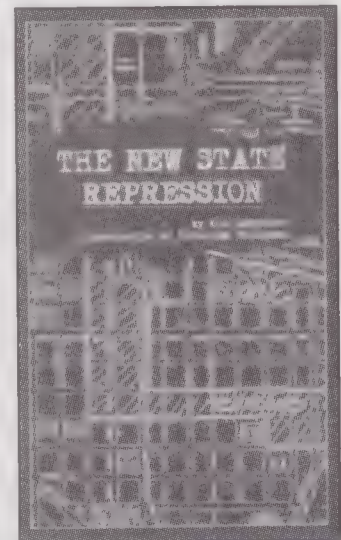
POB 20442
Seattle WA 98102
40 pages, \$2

This is a new anarchist publication from the North West that serves as an exciting counterpoint to the negligible NAF propaganda from the same area. Within are several on-the-ground reports from different parts of the world (Paris riots, Argentina, Vancouver projects, and Italian immigration struggles & Lecce arrests) and analytical pieces on Katrina, sabotage, the Green

Scare, and misrepresentation within anarchist reporting.

The introduction is particularly inspiring and articulates a project that I absolutely support (even if it isn't exactly mine). "...[A] primary intention of this journal is to encourage greater critical thought concerning methods and strategies employed in social struggle. In doing so we hope to share analysis of events and initiatives, exposing strengths and weaknesses of particular projects." The article on misrepresentation in anarchist reporting presents a few examples and criticizes them. It raises some questions about the enthusiasm of anarchists to see conflict where there isn't, and anti-authoritarian behavior where there may only be neglect (in reporting or in the forces of repression). The example of the interpretation of the Algerian insurrection of 2001 where many observers saw the (re)formation of the traditional social formation, the *aarch* (with revocable delegates and an explicit anti-political position) as of interest to anarchists, is counterpoised to the later discovery that the *aarch* did not allow women or many young men in its ranks. This lack of general knowledge on the part of the initial reporters does not eliminate how important the Algerian insurrection and *aarchs* are in understanding geo-political revolt. The *MoC* critique begs the question whether horizontality and inclusion are necessary and contingent, and how our own practice would differ from other cultural contexts. But lack of information extends in multiple directions; optimistic, fatalistic, liberal, and ideological. One can only hope that *Murder of Crows*

will continue consistent publication as it is an important project that merits review. [A!]



The New State Repression

By Ken Lawrence

Reprinted by Tarantula

24 pages, \$3
www.socialwar.net

This short reprint, with a new introduction by Kristian Williams—author of *American Methods* (reviewed in this issue), offers a brief and engaging look at the strategies of police repression. Written in 1985, this essay primarily focuses on "...the activities and strategies of the secret police (the intelligence agencies...)" (p.3) More to the point is the focus on the counterinsurgency strategy of Frank Kitson who wrote a governmental instruction book to counterinsurgency. Kitson argued that insurgency grows through three stages; a preparatory period, a non-violent phase, and the final stage of insurgency. Several other theorists are introduced to rebut and revise some of Kitson's ideas. What is perhaps most fascinating about this zine is the map of a fictional town called "Santa Luisa" which was used to provide trainees with

insurgency scenarios at the California Specialized Training Institute. "Santa Luisa" is neatly sectioned into class and ethnic areas, similar to many of today's cities. This short booklet is a bit dry but allows us an interesting glimpse of what military thinking looks like. A worthwhile read. [ML]

The New York Rat #6

newyorkrat@riseup.net

8 pages, donation

This is a small anarchist tabloid from NYC. This issue covers the Green Scare, cops' malfeasance, upcoming events in NYC, the Sorbonne occupation update that *AJODA* reprinted (issue #61) and news on new projects in NYC including *A for Anarchy* (a response to the movie "V for Vendetta"), The Green Apple Collective (food exchange collective), NY Guide to Military Recruitment, and NYMAA (NY Metro Alliance of Anarchists). [A!]

not blowing in the wind, intentionally swaying

akastrudel@hotmail.com

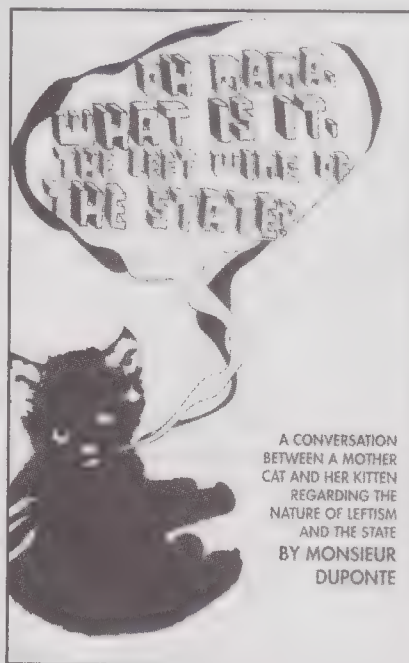
24 pages, \$2

I enjoy precise little projects like this one. It was written to be handed to friends and new acquaintances at the Montreal Book Fair and rather than expressing a politically shaped anarchism expresses an aesthetic one. Sketches and personal reflections on daily and ranged experiences give the impression that the personal zine has made the transition to anarchism. [A!]

Oh Mama, What is it, The Left Wing of the State?

8 pages, no price listed
ief-souteast@riseup.net

An enormously cute pamphlet that presents a conversation between a kitten and mama cat about the critique of the state and the bourgeoisie in densely theoretical language. "Dearest kitten, then what is the first of our critical tools? Oh mama, it is that we shall identify the counter-revolutionary as the one that quotes Lenin approvingly and in full knowledge of Kronstadt." [A!]



Perspectives on Anarchist Theory, Vol. 9, No. 1

POB 1664,
Peter Stuyvesant Station
NY, NY 10009
80 pages, \$5

This is one of the few anarchist periodicals in North America to require serious attention and many hours to read cover-to-cover. It comes to us from the Institute for Anarchist Studies, a "grant-giving organization for radical writers." It

has a thick and handsome (if plain) magazine format comprised mostly of long form articles about activist causes. Of particular note is John Petrovato's column on what books of interest to anarchists were released during late 2004 and 2005. He gives good context and backstory to the new and upcoming titles by AK Press (who also advertise) among other publishers. Josh MacPhee, of *Stencil Pirates* fame, asks "Four Questions for Anarchist Art" that are worth examining. Todd May contributes a review of Jacques Ranciere's work on equality. There is a lengthy section on anarchism in Bolivia presenting the writings of Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, and a history, a roundtable on anti-capitalist organizing in Beirut, and three responses to the question "what is international solidarity?" from perspectives based in organizing around Chiapas (Ramor Ryan), Palestine (Mark Lance), and Iraq (Andrea Schmidt).

Perspectives reads like a double issue of *Z magazine* produced entirely by anti-globalization-influenced anti-authoritarians (with fewer comics). It could only come out of the East Coast anarchist milieu—with its high concentration of graduate students (although this issue has a touch less of an academic reek than the last one) and intellectuals. Future issues of this periodical are abandoning the magazine form for the journal format which will be a good change for it. [A!]

Power Machine

Hannah Potassium
Emeryville CA
27 pages, \$2.50 or trade
power-machine@riseup.net

This zine has tons going for it: it's well-written, passionate, con-

sidered, honest (or at least reasonable and rounded enough to seem very honest), down to earth, and both depressed and undefeated.

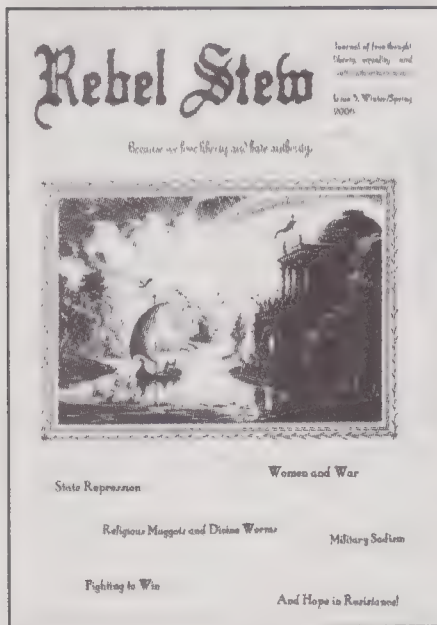
A "lengthy discourse on the nature of squatting," this is the story of a squat (and its disintegration) that asks some of my favorite questions—like, what exactly does community mean, how is language used to obfuscate, how do we stay motivated and appropriately idealistic in a world that is full of people who are not, and what does it mean to be political while we're living our lives?

Part of the story involves a conflict about creating women's space; this is interesting because it seems motivated (at least partly) by a desire to have an area in the squat for people who care about the space that is separate from people who don't. To me it appeared that the conversation got gendered as a way to make that fight make sense to people. Predictably, even that frame doesn't work.

The feminist politics seem overly simple—a woman is "not to blame for her insecurity," (surely we are all responsible for figuring out how to deal with the crappy hands we get dealt) while a man is responsible for recognizing the difference between his gender oppression and women's lack of gender privilege (yes, he is, but feminism-on-the-street hasn't been sophisticated about how to differentiate between power and privilege either)—or just not as thought out as other threads of the zine. On the other hand, it's hard to quarrel with the frustration and outrage of women who are taking care of something and are being forced to deal with mostly men who are tearing that thing apart.

The booklet is nicely put together (aside from some issues with unreadable-text-over-images) with a table of contents, appendices (!)

flowcharts, a bibliography, and font choices that echo the content's range from reasoned to outraged. [DM]



Rebel Stew #3
POB 2351
Falls Church, VA
48 pages, donation

This is a publication that I enjoy and look forward to it improving. It is a most consistently Woodworthian publication, emulating the style and politics of *The Match* and (new to this issue) being offset printed rather than photocopied. The articles are clearly written by people who are half the age of Fred's friends, and who mostly write on politics rather than from the full range of life experiences that *The Match* offers. Peter Gelderloos provides some of the best writing, and has been widely published recently, including his open letter to the global justice movement and an article on prisons. Tariq Khan (one of the publishers) writes against anarcho-capitalism and, breaking with Fred, for a nuanced approach to property destruction (although

biased against). The rest of the magazine contains general interest articles against militarism, religion, and authoritarianism and for education and historical education in particular. [A!]

Smert Za Smert
col.stroppa@gmail.com
200 pages, \$4

"Death for death" is the slogan of Russian anarchists who avenged the death of workers with a corresponding death of a member of the bourgeoisie, and it is a big title for any pamphlet. Inside this simple black cover and unusually shaped zine

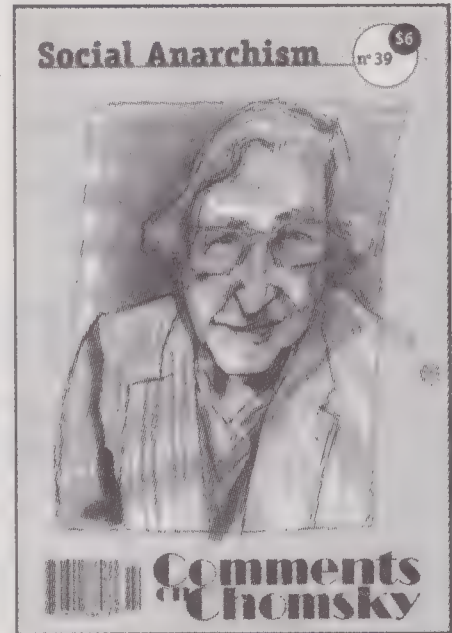
is page upon page of inspiring historical anecdotes—starting in 1861 with the escape of Bakunin from Siberia and ending today (actually in April) with a "when animals attack" story of 31 chimpanzees escaping from a preserve and mauling several people. This is not something that could be read in one sitting, or even several, but if you are feeling down and like nothing in your life will ever have meaning this is something to pick up to read a page out of at random. It will put a smile back on your face. [A!]

Social Anarchism #39
2743 Maryland Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21218
110 pages, \$6

This long running anarchist journal out of Baltimore is a surprisingly good issue. The theme of the issue is Chomsky, which would give one pause except that

the articles maintain a consistently high quality and critical outlook. Michael Lane's article "Chomsky: Language and Politics" is a review of a volume of interviews with Chomsky on linguistics (rather than politics) and places Chomsky, and his anarchism, within an appropriate (if controversial) intellectual environment with Lyotard, Bookchin, and Marx. Jane Meyering has a critical piece on "Chomsky & Feminism" that reads like a punch pulled (but still bruising). Robert Graham has an altogether too kind essay on "Chomsky's Contributions to Anarchism" (answer: he has communicated anarchism to a wide audience). Further contributions on Chomsky come from Peter Stone, Richard Kostelanetz, and Kingsley Widmer.

Even beyond Chomsky the content of this issue is consistently good. Of particular surprise is a decent article from Wayne Price on the anarchism of Paul Goodman. While concluding that Goodman's anarchism fails in its liberalism, Price ultimately praises him for his political practice and breadth of study. Chris Dodge writes an article on "Emma Goldman, Thoreau, and Anarchists." Peter Gelderloos's history of Harrisonburg Food Not Bombs is reprinted in this issue and raises interesting questions around the tensions between ideology and providing a service. Finally there is a very touching autobiographical sketch from David Koven who is local to the Bay Area. This is the most consistent issue of *Social Anarchism* I have read in many years. [A!]



Type A #2, Winter 2005
typea@riseup.net
16 pages, free

This is a publication from Toledo, Ohio. There are reports on Critical Mass, Food Not Bombs, and local politics. There is also lengthy commentary on the October 15th Uprising in Toledo, which started as a conflict against nazis and ended up being more general and targeting the police who protected them. Finally there is a reprint of a Feral Faun essay, "Insurgent Ferocity: The Playful Violence of Rebellion." [A!]

War on Misery #1
war_on_misery@hotmail.com
8 pages, free

This is a call to social war wrapped in a local newsletter (St. Louis). It details local bank robberies, strikes, and sabotage methods. Fuck the System! "There must be some kinda way outta here." indeed. [A!]

Seventy years ago, provoked by an attempted military coup backed by right-wingers, landowners, and the Catholic Church, there was a civil war and social revolution in Spain. The civil war was especially bitter (with at least half a million fatalities during its official three year span), while the social revolution was the most far-reaching and profound of the 20th century, arguably surpassing the Russian Revolution in the scope of the upheaval and overthrow of the previous social order, and the sheer number of people involved in the revolutionary processes.

In parts of Spain—especially in Catalunya and Aragon—starting on July 19th, 1936 the greatest triumph of the international anarchist movement occurred: government power in those regions pretty much disappeared, leaving anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists (the majority of the organized industrial and agricultural workers) to run things as they saw fit. A little over a year later, the Spanish anarchists had suffered their greatest defeat: their economic and social experiments, and the prestige and influence that came with them, were effectively suppressed by their erstwhile allies—Stalinists, socialists, and other forces of the Left.

There were three major aspects to the 13 months of the Spanish revolution: collectivization of industry and agriculture, raising of militias, and liberation of women. Collectivization overturned traditional capitalist property relations; the spontaneous organization of militias to fight the military upset traditional notions of hierarchy, centralization, and enforced discipline as well as bringing into question the necessity of the state; the liberation of women as revolutionary colleagues thoroughly undermined their traditional roles as mother, sex object, and unquestioning nurturer for men. This process affected millions, not just anarchists and not just Spaniards.

The pinnacle of anarchist success in Spain is usually thought to be the forming and operating of the industrial and agricultural collectives. However, while property relations were undermined, most of the collectives didn't dispense with capitalist social



The Spanish Revolution

by Lawrence Jarach

relations; they were merely restructured under a system of self-management—that is, capitalism without bosses. There was competition between some collectives, just as there is under private capitalism, and there was a system of wages and profits, especially among the industrial collectives. The rural situation was more varied, with some communities abolishing money and wages altogether. During the war the collectivists didn't really have the opportunity to discover if self-management might have led them in the direction of the declared program of the CNT, known as Libertarian Communism.

The Council of Aragon (the coordinating body for most of the collectives in that region) was a non-coercive administration of production and distribution as well as conflict resolution; it also had executive powers. The Council was formed by delegates (the majority of whom were *cenetistas*—members of the anarcho-syndicalist industrial union—with non-anarchists proportionally represented throughout) from the various agricultural collectives, and was run along the lines of a federated democracy. This was a counter-administration, to which a substantial majority of Aragonese (not just *cenetistas*) were loyal. The predominantly anarchist militias on the nearby front guaranteed its independence. If the agrarian collectives were an annoyance to Republicans for economic reasons, the existence of the Council of Aragon was intoler-

able—since it called into question the justifications for a system of interlocking coercive institutions (i.e. the state).

The military rebellion, the Catalan state, and aspects of the Central state in Madrid, were defeated by the CNT-led general strike. Armed workers (not just *cenetistas*) along with loyal police had stopped the attempted coup, and had made the governing mechanisms of the state entirely superfluous: revolutionary order was maintained by armed workers who patrolled the streets. Strikers began returning to work to find that owners and managers with right-wing sym-

pathies had disappeared and so, in accord with their ideas and programs, started collectively running necessary industries. The insurrectionary general strike of the anarcho-syndicalists had shown itself to be decisive. The response of most of the population of Barcelona to the attempted coup was to supersede the state by organizing their lives on their own terms for their own needs. But ignoring the state is not the same thing as definitively dismantling it. Neither the Central government nor the Generalitat (the semi-autonomous Catalan government) vanished as a result of the general strike; the Central government continued to operate, and the Generalitat merely went into hibernation. The Catalan partisans of government tried to convince the “influential militants” (as they were known) of the CNT-FAI that the victory in the streets was all there was to the revolution; most *cenetistas* and *faistas* seemed happy enough to believe it. While the *cenetistas* were substantial in number (upwards of 80% of the organized workers in Catalunya), they were still a minority, and none of them had an understanding or theory for grappling with the situation of being a revolutionary minority among a population that wasn't necessarily convinced that the state needed to be abolished.

The seeds for the failure of the anarchist revolution—at least in Barcelona specifically and Catalunya and Aragon in general—were planted on July 20th,

the proverbial day after the revolution. Several "influential militants" were invited into the office of the President of the Generalitat. After an ad hoc consultation with others in the CNT and FAI (not an official meeting, and so the attendees were not supposed to be able to make any kind of executive decisions) they decided to let the President and the rest of his cabinet stay on in their official capacities.

Faced with what they saw as the limited options of either collaborating with other parties of the Popular Front to favorably impress international political opinion or "going all the way" to Libertarian Communism, a majority of anarchists chose to collaborate with the Generalitat and later the Central government. The justification would be that by collaborating, the *cenetistas* were doing their best to help influence government policy in ways that gave CNT-FAI experiments legitimacy, and that they had also thereby avoided setting up an "anarchist dictatorship." But by collaborating with the political parties of the Left they helped resurrect and strengthen the state, an odd position for any anarchist. Once some of the "influential militants"

became embroiled in the game of statecraft as government ministers, they were easily manipulated and outmaneuvered by their more skillful and experienced rivals. Rather than threatening to resign at moments of crisis (as many other ministers did at various times), and thereby removing the support of the CNT-FAI from the Republic, the government anarchists remained loyal to their idealized fantasies about this supposedly new form of revolutionary state. By the time they more fully understood what it had meant to collaborate in the centralizing and bolstering of the Republic, they had all been removed from government.

It is important to note that there were plenty of people and organizations in

the Republican zone who didn't support the military coup and counter-revolution but who were also not happy about the revolutionary upsurge. Socialists, Communists, and Republicans alike all agreed that the radical actions of the "uncontrollables" needed to be stopped. Partisans of law and order, politicians who were invested in maintaining the state and capitalism (or some form of socialism) and even some members of the CNT-FAI who feared too much spontaneity or revolutionary experimentation outside the sponsorship or control of the Organization—or who were frank supporters of the Popular Front—had plenty to lose as the result of a revolution



made and extended by self-organized, armed, working class people. At each stage of collectivization, organizing militias, and women's liberation, there were anti-fascist forces that fought to curtail them—often with the ultimate goal of reverting to the pre-revolutionary status quo. These anti-revolutionary forces of the Left would ultimately succeed in destroying all anarchist achievements, thus undermining their own ability to withstand the Nationalist onslaught.

The militias were attacked as too spontaneous and disorganized to be effective fighting forces against the more numerous Nationalist militarists (with their virtually unlimited access to German and Italian troops and materiel). Bolstered

by the military aid of the Soviet Union, the militarization of the militias (either disbanding them or integrating them into the new Popular Army as well as ending the participation of women in combat) was completed by appealing to traditional notions of trench warfare, hierarchy and iron discipline, as well as outright extortion (militia columns preferring not to be militarized were refused supplies).

The politicians of the Popular Front, horrified by the anarchist revolution, promoted the strategy that winning the war was more important than any restructuring of social relations. Many anarchists—especially the anarchist ministers—agreed, abandoning their principles by putting the political needs of the Republic ahead of support for any kind of revolution. By the time the Catalan Stalinists and Left Republicans made their move against the power of the CNT-FAI in Barcelona (what became known as the May Days), the government anarchists would call for a cease fire and the disarming of anarchists behind the front.

After the industrial base of the anarchists was destroyed, the way was clear to attack and suppress the agricultural collectives and the Council of Aragon. Troops of the Popular Army marched through the countryside in August, breaking up the collectives; in many cases the land was turned back to the deed-holders. The staunchest supporters of the rights of private property and class distinctions turned out to be members of the Spanish Communist Party, working to implement the orders of their Comintern handlers.

While most anarchists continued to fight on as soldiers in the Popular Army, many others walked away from the conflict, disgusted by the implementation of the militarism they had so long opposed, and demoralized by the Republican destruction of the revolution. Franco's war of attrition took its toll on the Republic. What the Nationalist army was unable to do with a frontal assault, it accomplished by waiting until the Republic imploded. It eventually

marched into Barcelona and Madrid unopposed. The civil war was declared officially over in April 1939. Thousands were summarily executed in the months following (as they had been during the three years of open conflict), thousands more were interned in concentration camps. Franco's dictatorship lasted nearly four decades, with military courts having jurisdiction over anarchists who engaged in any kind of resistance (armed or not). Judicial murders would continue throughout the years of Franco's regime; the civil war didn't really begin coming to an end until his death in 1975.

Questions about the Spanish anarchist experience remain, and are worth discussing.

Probably the biggest involves the difficulties of being a revolutionary minority; it seems abundantly clear from examining radical history that those who explicitly and on principle reject the state and other institutional hierarchies will continue to be a minority among those advocating revolution. With that in mind, other questions follow. What kind of organization(s) offer the best chances for the success (whatever that might mean) of an anarchist revolution, and what organizational forms and structures hinder it? How do those of us who advocate anti-hierarchical revolution guard against representational politics? What should our relations be

with advocates of revolution who insist on capturing or otherwise using the state and/or hierarchical structures?

The revolution in Spain began in the summer of 1936 as a nearly spontaneous response to an attempted coup d'état by the forces of reaction; it was drowned in anarchist blood in the spring and summer of 1937 by self-described anti-fascists. That revolution and the events surrounding it remain a turning point for anti-state revolutionaries, if for no other reason than most of the tentative conclusions and lessons have yet to be learned—or even considered—by contemporary anarchists.



By 1936, there were over a million *cenetistas* (members of the CNT; *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo*). There were anarchists who never joined the CNT and not all *cenetistas* were anarcho-syndicalists.

Those who conspired and attacked the Spanish Republic called themselves Nationalists; they are also known as the Rebels or Fascists. Those who defended the elected Spanish government were called Republicans, or Loyalists, or anti-fascists. This dualistic oversimplification doesn't help to explain where anarchists fit in. No anarchists supported the Nationalists, but how much sense does it make to think of them as supporters of the Popular Front government, putting them under the Republican umbrella? Complicating things even more is the fact that there were plenty of members of the CNT and the FAI (*Federación Anarquista Iberica*, Iberian Anarchist Federation) whose careers looked very pro-Republican. There had always been *cenetistas* who were interested in making the CNT a legally recognized mediating force between labor and capital, turning it away from direct action. Calling them a loyal opposition to the Republic would not be an exaggeration.

Historians usually consign the Spanish conflict to being a rehearsal for WWII, with Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin trying out their respective military theories; the politics—complicated as they were by the huge presence of anarchists—are mostly ignored. Mainstream mythology has it that the Spanish Civil War was a conflict between Democracy and Fascism. Anarchists, however, are usually more drawn to the revolutionary experiments and widespread social transformation; it is only in the last few decades that mainstream historians have deigned to acknowledge that something along

those lines even existed, let alone that they might have had any influence on events. Several contemporary historians emphasize that the morale and inspiration of the militias (at least those dedicated to revolution) was intimately tied in with the idea of defending a revolution behind the front lines.

Recommended Books:

Free Women of Spain by Martha Ackelsberg. A mixture of oral and documentary history of *Mujeres Libres*, the anarchist women's organization. Situates the struggle for women's liberation as central to the overall anarchist revolutionary project.

The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War 1936-1939 by Antony Beevor. The author is a military historian who is sympathetic to the anarchists. He looks at the tensions in Spanish culture that contributed to the Civil War and to what culminated in the suppression of anarchist activities by other anti-fascists. (This is one of our options for free books for 8-issue subscriptions.)

The Spanish Civil War by Burnett Bolloten. A detailed examination of the revolution inspired by anarchists and the anti-revolutionary nature of the Spanish Communist Party, from before the conflict through the May Days. Overflowing with primary source material.

We, the Anarchists! by Stuart Christie. A brief, but dense, look at the origin and *raison d'être* of the FAI (to curb the influence of the more reformist-minded *cenetistas*), from its formation to its degeneration into a fractured

federation of revolutionaries and pro-government anarchists.

Blood of Spain by Ronald Fraser. This is an oral history, covering individuals' stories from all across the spectrum of Spanish politics. Fascists, monarchists, Stalinists, Catalan nationalists, and anarchists are all represented.

Collectives in the Spanish Revolution by Gaston Leval. An exhaustive study of the economic achievements and social restructuring of various industrial and agricultural collectives. Indispensable for those who love statistics.

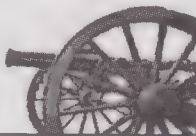
Homage to Catalonia by George Orwell. The classic first-hand account of fighting at the front as well as the May Days in Barcelona. Orwell had to flee Spain after learning that he was on the wanted list of the Stalinist secret police for being in the POUM militia. (This is one of our options for free books for 8-issue subscriptions.)

Durruti: The People Armed by Abel Paz. The biography of one of the most well-known of the "influential militants," who avoided being pulled into the government by leading his own militia column.

Lessons of the Spanish Revolution by Vernon Richards. This is a lucid analysis of anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists in the Spanish events, with a particularly critical appraisal of the role of the anarchist ministers and the justifications for their entry into government. Includes a very useful critical bibliography.

Loose Canons

by Ben Blue



Attentive readers will note that for many years guest writers have written under the column heading, Loose Canons. Originally, the idea was that this column, too, would appear under that heading, but someone (not me) decided it would be funny to delete an 'n.' The original term refers to an irresponsible and reckless individual whose behavior (either intended or unintended) endangers the group he or she belongs to. Well, maybe that's (unintentionally) me. A loose canon is something else entirely. The word canon can refer to a collection of texts accepted by a religious community as authoritative or divinely inspired, a set of rules and measurements used in creating a work of art, and of course there's a musical canon. Since Douglas Hofstadter's *Godel, Escher, Bach: an Eternal Golden Braid* forms part of the canon of texts contributing to my schizophreniform disorder, his definition of a canon seems worth quoting.

The idea of a canon is that one single theme is played against itself... In order for a theme to work as a canon theme, each of its notes must be able to serve in a dual (or triple, or quadruple) role: it must firstly be part of a melody, and secondly it must be part of a harmonization of the same melody. ... Thus, each note in a canon has more than one musical meaning; the listener's ear and brain automatically figure out the appropriate meaning, by referring to context.

The basic theme of this ongoing column can be summarized in two words: I am. As a canon, this theme gets played against itself, and as a loose canon, well ... that sounds like a fugue. Hofstadter tells us

A fugue is like a canon, in that it

is usually based on one theme which gets played in different voices and different keys, and occasionally at different speeds or upside down or backwards. However, the notion of a fugue is much less rigid than that of a canon, and consequently it allows for more emotional and artistic expression.

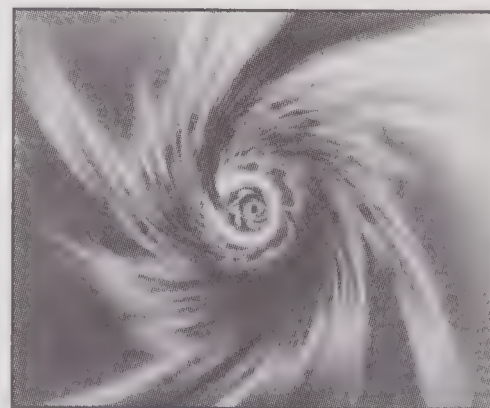
The American Heritage Dictionary tells us that a fugue is also "A pathological condition during which one is apparently conscious of his actions but has no recollection of them after returning to a normal state." This describes my time at Havenwyck Hospital nicely. Perhaps, in some ideal future, this will describe the last ten thousand years of human history, too.

Why wait for some imaginary future? Part of my problem then, and now, is the problem of time. What does it look like to enact the Black Panther slogan "Seize the Time"? The Talking Heads tell us "Time isn't after us. Time isn't holding us." William Blake says "Eternity is in love with the productions of time." Think of what it might mean

To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour.

Elsewhere Blake informs us "One thought fills immensity." What is that thought? I am.

Consider this. There is no I that is not a we. If we accept the narrative premises of contemporary biologists, involving evolutionary time scales of four billion years, we find ourselves in solidarity with all eukaryotes, facing prokaryotic domains of bacteria and archaea. But it often proves difficult to face something both within you and without you. In this story, a human body consists of some 110 trillion cells, only 10 trillion of them animal cells, the remaining 100 trillion are bacterial cells in varying states of voluntary cooperation and competition. On a material level, 'you'



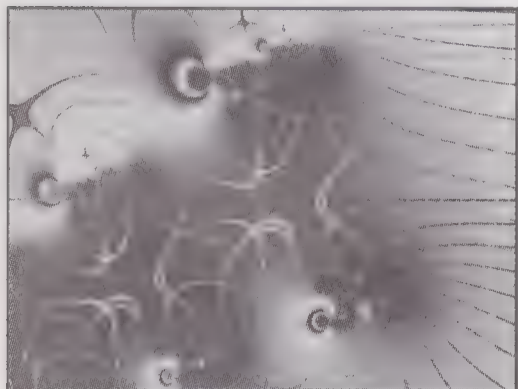
are/'I' am a 'we', a colonial organism. If we take the biologists seriously and begin to develop an anarchist interpretation of biopolitics, we may find no better models of long term successful voluntary cooperation and mutual aid than in the historic rise of the eukaryotes, in particular the peace treaty with the mitochondria.

In a conversation/argument with Ja-

We may find no better models of long term successful voluntary cooperation and mutual aid than in the historic rise of the eukaryotes.

son McQuinn some years ago, regarding the merits of Howard Bloom's relevance for anarchists, I noted one area in which I find the views of Subgenius Waves Forest, Bloom, and Kim Stanley Robinson converging is in the realm of microbiology, with the assertion that anaerobic bacteria have killed more humans throughout history than all states combined. Robinson argues through one of his characters in *The Years of Rice and Salt* that the eternal problem faced by humans throughout recorded history is the predations of microorganisms and macroorganisms (such as states and corporations). Bloom makes a strong case in his work that bacteria acting collectively exhibit more intelligence than any individual human and perhaps more than the six billion of us combined. Waves Forest in his brilliant story "Bob and the Oxygen Wars" makes the point that since the "Conspiracy is smart enough to be actually accomplishing its goals, and since the overall effect of all the Conspiracy's actions is to eventually ruin this planet's ox-

xygen cover and render it uninhabitable for humans and other higher life-forms, apparently that must be one of their goals." So, he ventures, the activities of modern civilization are ultimately aimed at serving



the interests of a bunch of germs. But, I ask you, what if time doesn't exist?

In 1991, in my own dumb way, attempting to synthesize the insights of Albert Einstein's Special and General Relativity theories with the Incompleteness Theorem of Kurt Goedel, while lacking the mathematical or logical expertise to do so competently, I was coming to a realization demonstrated by Goedel in 1949: In any universe described by the Theory of Relativity, time cannot exist.

Nisargadatta Maharaj emerges again to assert "The real you is timeless and beyond birth and death, beyond being and non-being." There is no particular reason why anarchists should pay any attention to Goedel or Einstein or an obscure and impoverished cigarette-salesman from Bombay. Nor is it necessary that anarchists pay any attention to me, as it may well be the case that the only difference between a madman and myself is that the doctors at Havenwyck Hospital said I could go home. Remember Stokely Carmichael's adage: "The ultimate power is the power to define."

Who, other than you, should define sanity?

What about Alfred Korzybski, an influence on Buckminster Fuller, Robert Anton Wilson, and William S. Burroughs, and author of *Science and Sanity*? What shall we make of Korzybski's assertion that we must consider ourselves as a

symbolic, semantic class of life, and those who rule the symbols, rule us. It must be emphasized again that as long as we remain humans (which means a symbolic class of life), the rulers of symbols will rule us, and that no amount of revolution will ever change this.

Korzybski informs us

A complete list of our rulers is difficult to give; yet, a few classes of them are quite obvious. Bankers, priests, lawyers and politicians constitute one class and work together... If a psychiatric and scientific enquiry were to be made upon our rulers, mankind would be appalled at the disclosures.

Consider, as a case in point, George Herbert Walker Bush, the President who so disturbed me in 1991. Given some of my interests, it is not terribly difficult to disparage me as a paranoid conspiracy theorist, but it is not a theory that one name can be directly linked to the Third Reich, the US military industrial complex, Skull and Bones, the Eastern Establishment, the Knights of Malta, Licio Gelli and the *Propaganda Due* Masonic Lodge, Big Texas Oil, the Bay of Pigs, the Miami Cubans, the Mafia, the FBI, the JFK assassination, the New World Order, Watergate, the Republican National Committee, Eastern European fascists, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission, the United Nations, CIA headquarters, the October Surprise, the Iran/Contra scandal, Inslaw, the Christic Institute, Manuel Noriega, drug-running freedom fighters and death squads, the inner-city crack explosion, Iraqgate, Saddam Hussein, weapons of mass destruction, the savings and loan crash, the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, the "Octopus," the Afghan mujaheddin, the War on Drugs, Mena (Arkansas), Whitewater, Sun Myung Moon, the Carlyle Group, Osama bin Laden and the Saudi royal family, David Rockefeller, Henry Kissinger, and the presidency and vice-presidency of the United States: George Herbert Walker Bush.

If only the elimination of GHWB and

his son W would eradicate all of the above! It's interesting to note that even the Dalai Lama "could see developing a 'smart' bullet that could seek out those who decide on wars in the first place. That would seem to [him] more fair, and on these grounds [he] would welcome a weapon that eliminated the decision-makers while leaving the innocent unharmed." In my world, as imagined by John Lennon, there is nothing to kill or die for. For those of you out in the real world I can only offer the advice that "It's your thing. Do what you want to do. I can't tell you who to sock it to."

Let's return to questions raised in the initial column of this series. What is the relationship between us? How does it differ from the set of relationships that comprise the world? Here's a new answer brought to my attention by a dead man, logician and eco-philosopher Richard Sylvan, perhaps the smartest anarchist you never heard of.

There is not merely a plurality of correct theories and of more or less satisfactory world-views: there is a corresponding plurality of actual worlds. Plurality penetrates deeper in full pluralism than linguistic surface or than conceptual or theoretical structure, to worlds. There is no unique actual world such as realism postulates, but many worlds; there is no single fact of the matter, there are facts and matters.

It is not only true that another world is possible. A multitude of worlds are actual! It might strike you, as it does me, that I might not know what the hell I'm talking about. Perhaps, in my post-schizophreniform condition, I can only sing to you as John Lennon did to his dead mother, "Half of what I say is meaningless, but I say it just to reach you." My hope is that you might find yourself agreeing with the assessment of Walt Whitman in "Song of Myself":

You will hardly know who I am or what I mean,

But I shall be good health to you nevertheless. . . .

Introduction: pt 1

Writing an encyclopedia is an ambitious project, arguably expressing more egotism than egoism. I would never deny being ambitious (and perhaps a bit arrogant as well); nonetheless, I feel it is necessary to explain what I mean by "encyclopedia." In the 18th century in France, Diderot, along with his friend and occasional intellectual sparring partner D'Alembert, edited one of the most famous encyclopedias of all time. In this work, he explains that this word is made up of the Greek preposition meaning *in* and two Greek words meaning *circle* and *knowledge* (*paedia* more accurately means learning rather than mere factual knowledge, but more on that later). Diderot concluded from this that the word meant *chain of knowledge* and involved gathering together knowledge from around the globe. But I look at this etymology with a bit more whimsy. In ancient Greece (and in other parts of the Mediterranean up to the late Middle Ages), learning and philosophical discourse often took place in gardens, parks, or around the streets of cities where there was still only foot traffic while the students and teachers walked around in circles. Sometimes in my more utopian reveries, I imagine a world where learning, discussion and debate can happen in a similar fashion, on long, aimless walks in an environment without the noise and threat of large machines to disturb the flow of ideas, projects, and dreams. These strolls, after the manner of the Peripatetics and the Stoics, would be the "circles of learning" that encyclopedias would record. Well, Portland (where I reside) is a modern city. The traffic, the noise, the lack of adequate space limits the possibility for pursuing discussions of more than two or three people in this manner, and even these small discussions are usually burdened with the need to watch for the potentially deadly traffic. So such encyclopedic endeavors mostly exist only in a metaphorical sense.

Nonetheless, if I gather most of my knowledge from books, it is the discussions I



The Egoist Encyclopedia

by Wolfi Landstreicher

have in my circles of friends and acquaintance, or among strangers who I encounter in my circumambulations around this town and around the world, that provide me with the capacity for critical thinking that turns this knowledge from mere facts to real learning. Thus, the circle of learning remains the source for my ideas, thoughts, and reveries.

In this sense, Diderot is right to claim that one individual could not write an encyclopedia. The process of learning, of developing the capacity to think critically and confront the realities and the ideas one encounters with discernment and shrewdness, always involves lively interactions with others in battles of wits, learning to use thoughts and words with precision and richness. In this sense, any

encyclopedia worthy of reading will always be the project of many. But unlike Diderot, I see no reason why one individual cannot choose to bring the results of this process together on paper for his own purposes, making a record of what she has drawn from these circles of learning to further her own projects and aspirations. In fact, if one has the arrogance and ambition, I would be surprised if he didn't do something of this sort even if he calls it by a different name. Thus, it should surprise no one who knows me that I am taking up such a project.

I have made several references to Diderot and his encyclopedia, because these were among the main inspirations for this project.* Although Diderot emphasizes the collective nature of such a project and describes its purpose as the gathering together of supposedly objective knowledge, many of his own entries in the encyclopedia he helped to edit stand out precisely because he goes beyond these limits. He uses humor and sarcasm to take his own entries—beyond the realm of mere rote expression of what is supposedly known—to a critical interaction with the subject matter that expresses his own ideas, his personal confrontation with the world around him. This is what I intend to accomplish here. If learning is not merely about gathering bits of knowledge to spew forth as trivia, but is rather about developing the tools for critically interacting with the world, then it is an intense and playful battle of wits in which critical thinking, humor, sarcasm, and mockery combine to heighten our capacities to encounter a hostile world on our own terms.

In this sense, I intend this encyclopedia not to be a chain of gathered knowledge, but rather an intervention into the wide "circle of learning" that the development of anarchist theory and practice could be. So come, if you will, and take a walk with me. We might all learn something, and it should at least be fun.

*The *Encyclopedia des Nuisances* from France and John Zerzan's *Nihilist Dictionary* also provided inspiration.





Everyone writes science fiction... most write it without having the slightest idea that they are doing so.

Joyce Carol Oates.

One could critically deride the whole of anarchist theory as escapist fantasy. Much the same can be said for science fiction, in particular the sub-genre of space opera. However, when all available surface area on a planet increasingly resembles a minimum security prison, then engaging in escapist fantasy becomes an eminently reasonable activity. It may prove worthwhile here to mention the literary output of sci-fi author Iain M. Banks, with specific reference to a series of novels regarding *The Culture*, a group-civilization formed from seven or eight humanoid species, space-living elements of which established a loose federation approximately nine thousand years ago. Particularly relevant to the Oakland AAA, and worthy of extensive quotation, are Banks' *Notes On The Culture*:

Essentially, the contention is that our currently dominant power systems cannot long survive in space; beyond a certain technological level a degree of anarchy is arguably inevitable and anyway preferable. To survive in space, ships/habitats must be self-sufficient, or very nearly so; the hold of the state (or the corporation) over them therefore becomes tenuous if the desires of the inhabitants conflict significantly with the requirements of the controlling body. On a planet, enclaves

can be surrounded, besieged, attacked; the superior forces of a state or corporation—hereafter referred to as hegemonies—will tend to prevail. In space, a break-away movement will be far more difficult to control, especially if significant parts of it are based on ships or mobile habitats. The hostile nature of the vacuum and the technological complexity of life support mechanisms will make such systems vulnerable to outright attack, but that, of course, would risk the total destruction of the ship/habitat, so denying its future economic contribution to whatever entity was attempting to control it.

Concomitant with this is the argument that the nature of life in space—that vulnerability, as mentioned above—would mean that while ships and habitats might more easily become independent from each other and from their legally progenitive hegemonies, their crew—or inhabitants—would always be aware of their reliance on each other, and on the technology which allowed them to live in space. The theory here is that the property and social relations of long-term space-dwelling (especially over generations) would be of a fundamentally different type compared to the norm on a planet; the mutuality of dependence involved in an environment that is inherently hostile would necessitate an internal social coherence that would contrast with the external casualness typifying the relations between such ships/habitats. Succinctly; socialism within, anarchy without. This broad result is—in the long run—independent of the initial social and economic conditions which give rise to it.

Let us leave the realm of our sci-fi future to acknowledge historical predecessors of the Association of Autonomous Astronauts. It can be argued that the Post-Terrestrial Age was inaugurat-

ed in 1926 with the formation of the German group Verein für Raumschiffahrt (Association for Space Travel). Timothy Leary, who advocated a program of Space Migration, Intelligence Increase, and Life Extension while incarcerated in a federal prison, offered this assessment from his jail cell:

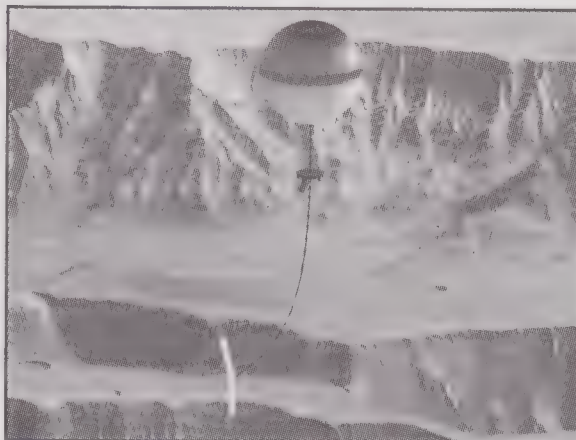
The V.f.R. held meetings, published research papers and performed rocket experiments. The group, unaffiliated with government, operated with the free dedication of a medieval alchemical fraternity. It was disbanded after the accession of Hitler. The goal of the V.f.R. was to arrange chemicals in the correct geometric order to produce the escape velocity to leave the planet.

The Nazis coopted the work of the V.f.R. to create the V-1 and V-2 rockets. In America, the co-option of nuclear energy, electronics, and rocket-research by the military blocked the interstellar perspective and encouraged subsequent popular disillusion with science and technology. At present, the technological leaders in astronautics, and the largest recipients of federal funding, Lockheed Martin, also lead in nuclear weapons design. It should come as no surprise, then, that a recent vote at the United Nations to ban the weaponization of space was vetoed by only two nation-states: the United States and Israel.

In this environment, the success of the AAA project may well depend upon some unusual, and admittedly distasteful alliances. Just as a stone age hunting band has little hope of establishing a moon colony, so too, with us, the increment-of-association necessary to achieve viable space habitats may involve overstepping the bounds of conventional anarchist propriety. This could mean co-operation with anarcho-capitalist drop-outs from NASA, Boeing, General Dynamics, or Lockheed Martin, or perhaps even

with members of non-American, non-Israeli hegemonic space programs. We can do so, confident with Iain M. Banks that, in the long term, our vision of a desirable society will prevail due to the nature of space itself. A good place for us to begin searching out such allies will be among those inspired by *The Starflight Handbook: The Pioneer's Guide to Interstellar Travel* by Eugene Mallove and Gregory Matloff. Mallove, it should be noted, in an open letter written the day before his murder, explicitly mentioned anarchists, among those people who have open-minded curiosity, good will, good judgment, and imagination.

His appeal for assistance in investigating new forms of abundant, clean, and safe energy from sources that have



no centralized geopolitical control is well worth the attention of any anarchists who wish to join us in space. It may be added that this open letter is worth the attention of any anarchists

who wish to remain behind on an Earth uncontaminated by oil wars or nuclear waste. May you inherit the Earth! As for us, while we share anarchist disdain for the materialism of statist technology, the scientism that produces plastic consumerism, military-industrialism, assembly-line anomie, and polluted over-population, our presence in the anarchist camp must still puzzle you. Why are we here?, you ask. We are here to go. Up, up, and away.

Anarchy Anxiety

by Liana Doctrines

Before we go anywhere in this exploration, what do I mean by anxiety?

Anxiety is a fear and the resulting set of protective behaviors which form in response to a real or fabricated threat, and continue though that threat has passed. Anxiety is a fear out of its original context. It can look like avoiding conflict, bonding, criticisms, direct answers, certain places, situations, tasks, or technologies. It can manifest as over or under functioning, cliquishness, feigned helplessness, dogmatic philosophies that favor certain personalities, angry outbursts, and the desire to control situations, people, or conversations. It can lead to not having an opinion or having an opinion about everything. It can cause us to cloud agreements or expectations, create pre-

tenses, or outright excuses. It can look like not completing tasks on time, avoiding fascinating projects, events, and discussions. So why do we have it if it's so destructive to our desired lives? Where did it come from?

The government wants us anxious. The corporations approve. Why? For many reasons, several of which you could probably guess. For instance, anxiety is a perfect form of social control, it keeps people confused, alienated, filled with self-doubt, and unable to form strong opinions or act on them. It also promotes capitalism and creates a population cheaper and more efficient to control than outright slaves; the people will fight for the privilege to stay at home buying the locks, mace, alarms, and sedatives for themselves. The structure of our society is engineered to foster anxiety, and sells us the idea that these institutions are wholesome and good for us; we would be lost without them.



Our nuclear families are defended as sacrosanct, but they breed anxiety into us, dividing us into groups too small to thrive. They keep us tired and lonely, on the edge of survival. They tell us that we're safe, we're part of something unique and special; a net that makes us stronger, but really we're being isolated, alienated, and worn out. Insecure about our place in the world, we buy more and work harder to make our little enclaves look

legitimate, even when they are festering with cruelty.

Attempts at larger community are slandered as useless or corrupt. Our schools are designed to make us passive and insecure, they teach us to jump to bells and whistles, to be submissive and follow rules, and to train our physical needs to a schedule. We are graded on our ability to thrive under these controlled conditions; assessed repeatedly to determine our worth to the glorious system, reminding us we can never stop working to conform ourselves to its needs. And our efficiency will determine the amount of money we will make, the kind of home we will have, and the happiness we will be able to achieve.

They tell us we're safe... They tell us we're not safe...

The media reiterates how much worse our lives could be, how our neighbors could be serial killers, how it's best to stick to the well traveled paths of life. Stay with the herd of strangers held at arms length. It reports that all our fears are rational, the world is a scary unsafe place, filled with scary unsafe people. It promotes the uncritical acceptance of the entertainment and pseudo relationships offered by the television and internet, and we count ourselves lucky to simply be alive and so comfortably situated in our self made cells.

Advertisements remind us how inadequate we are, how we need to buy the newest technologies, more time at the gym, the best coffee, the fastest cell phones and food, and the most secure retirement. We can never achieve enough, be rich enough or beautiful enough. The goals are unattainable and we are kept leaping for them; it tires us out, makes us unsure of ourselves.

And our national myths...oh those great and shining examples

of justice and equality, they remind us that if we are not achieving more, if we are not wealthy and happy in this "land of the free" then we have only ourselves to blame. No where else on Earth do we have more opportunities than here, our failures are certainly personal.

And the health care industry and self help movement? They offer us pills, over educated strangers, and behavior modification exercises to remove our negative feelings, and encourage us to contribute to society again. They urge us to feel good joining the rest of the population.

These institutions are meant to catch those of us who fell through all the other nets; it is an industry dedicated to helping us see how lucky we are, to help us sit back and relax into our productive little lives.

It is tempting to believe that there is something wrong with us, if we've held on to expired fears and used them to justify sets of irrational looking behaviors. After all, who but ourselves can we blame for how we feel and what we do? And yet, if we simply believe these experts when they tell us we are sick and our illnesses are of our making, then we will fall into their trap of buying cures, and succors, and staring fixedly at our navels in the company of strangers.

One approach to this dilemma is to say there is nothing wrong with any of us, the system is sick, and leave it at that. I prefer this approach to a complete and unthinking supplication to a professional diagnosis, but this reaction misses an opportunity to reclaim part of our emotional lives. Exploring the complexities of our fears and actions, and deciding for ourselves how we feel about them, whether they are helpful and appropriate, or obstacles to our desires is not buying in to their paradigm; it is part of self management.

Another route might look like asking: why try to demolish any of our feelings? Anger can arouse action, sadness can stimulate creativity, and happiness can lead to complacency.

What can anxiety inspire? Anxiety produces the same physical response as sexual arousal; we could call it passion with a twist of fear and learn to like it. (Truthfully, I'm a bit addicted to it now.) I have also found some of my anxieties are useful in navigating the bureaucracies of this world, streamlining the necessary and odious tasks. But admittedly, there are other anxieties that stand resolutely in the way of the life I desire for myself, and I just can't let it go at that.

One of the most crippling anxieties I have seen in myself and my fellow anarchists, including individualists, is social. Many of us are withdrawing critically from mainstream society and this can be a lonely endeavor, even if we are lucky enough to be surrounded by political allies. This loneliness is increased by social anxieties which can cause us to hide ourselves from each other physically, verbally, or emotionally. Excessive worrying about fitting in, not speaking up enough or talking too much, being vulnerable, sounding too smart or stupid, and fears about being liked or not disliked enough can hinder our ability to create and maintain intimate relationships and form the communities that our philosophies prescribe. It can keep us from engaging in important personal and philosophical conversations and resolving misunderstandings.

Some of my anxieties don't stop me from being or doing what I desire, but some of them do. As an anarchist I believe that I am responsible for sculpting my life into what I want it to be and so I have delved into the mass of books, groups, classes, and videos about "overcoming" anxiety, desensitizing techniques, therapy, and the like...and I have spent a lot of time talking with the people close to me about it, getting to understand how it manifests and all the different ways I feel about those manifestations. These are just some of the many thoughts I have had on the subject.

Anxiety will rule us if we let it. I am an anarchist in progress.

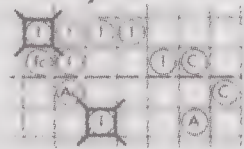


I want to apologize for the terminology I am about to use. I believe that this information, on the militaristic approach to problem solving, is important information for those who are seen as the problems. In understanding this approach I have used militaristic language that converts humans and groups into units, squads, and platoons. This language is par for the course given their intentions but it is important to draw a clear distinction between their mentality, our education, and how we would want to apply this knowledge. I strongly discourage using their terms and methodology in contexts that we choose to involve ourselves with.
Naming is power.

At the Our Lives Ahead conference this summer I attended an interesting workshop on Crowd Control & Street Tactics led by an ex-National Guardsman who had been through several sessions of (anti) protest training. This person led the room full of people through exercises that included marching, baton handling, formations, and an introduction to crowd control. It was interesting to see the reactions of the attendees to this education, to guess at what trainees experience during similar situations in the Guard, and see how the attendees transformed through the process of the techniques taught in the workshop. Additionally, the strategic implications of this workshop demand reflection.

What was not surprising, given the context of 1) video game culture, 2) the attendance of several boys around the age of 16-20 and 3) the presence of sections of PVC pipe serving as metaphorical batons, was the level of horseplay, phallic and weaponized. More surprising was exactly how quickly the group of baton-wielding humans turned into a scary, seemingly trained, group of crowd-controlling automations. As an observer I could feel the terror of how easy it would be for these people to hurt me, how it would be possible for them to do it without compassion (as I was not part of the group), and how attrac-

Anarchy & Strategy



by Aragorn!

tive being on the other side of this line was for the participants.

These were not bad people. They were goofy, young, activist types who wanted to understand the specifics of how they are terrorized by armored thugs when they go to protest events. However, the logic of formations and batons was far more powerful than the intentions of the people who participated in that training. The feeling of pushing other people around, and having group approval to do it, to have the stick instead of merely being right, was the lesson.

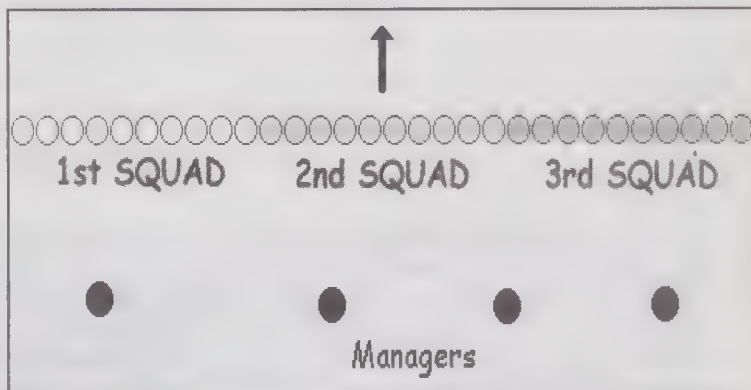
I have no doubt that the majority of the people who went through this training and experienced this will not become cops or automations but will remember

the power of simple techniques in controlling people. A lot of time and energy is spent by social scientists and military functionalists to come up with these techniques and they use several metrics to determine success. Are the techniques actually usable to achieve their primary goal? Do they achieve their secondary goals? Are the techniques trainable?

Regarding crowd control there can be several primary goals: containment, dispersal, and immobilization. The training that the NG uses (as demonstrated in the workshop cited above) focuses on formations, baton control, and technology to accomplish their primary goal. They are less interested in immobilization (and capture)

than a police force would be. Secondary goals include maintaining unit morale, demonstration of force, and mobility. The implication of the question of morale is of much more concern with the NG than with the police because of their voluntary rather than professional status and the limitations of their training. Finally, and related to the first two issues, is the idea that while certain techniques may be more effective at tactical containment and dispersal, their training and implementation require professionalism that doesn't exist in the National Guard.

The bulk of the training in the workshop reflected what would be necessary in an NG unit. The formation training was simple but distilled the basic formation types in a brief period of time. The line formation is the classic crowd control forma-



tion with the unit, a squad of eight, facing the crowd in a single file line with squad leaders in a receded line. Three squads (in the context of NG) comprise a platoon.

The column formation is used to move a unit from one point to another. Other formations (the wedge or square) were also taught but their use, in a modern context, is related more to team building and hierarchal self-identification than to practical pursuits. The baton training was similarly simple and boiled down to two actions, using the baton to push a crowd and using the baton to hold and shape the line formation. Since the goal of the presentation, and the training generally, is to hold the line rather

than to beat a crowd (we will get into the reasons for this in a minute) baton use is a strategic rather than a tactical consideration. It is more important that everyone is doing the same thing rather than anyone being particularly proficient—never mind skilled—in baton use.

This training is markedly different from police training in a number of regards. Police have a primary goal of immobilization leading to prosecution, which means that even in the context of the traditional line formation they have additional operational forces than the corresponding NG unit (although it is possible to imagine NG units using these special units in many situations). The linebackers (what we usually refer to as the snatch squad) have mobility behind and in front of the line and use cues to target and immobilize members (usually perceived leaders) of a crowd. They usually do not dress in uniform but are known to wear either some sort of marker (including visible badges, armbands, hats, etc) or use hand signals to pass through control lines. Many crowd control situations

include several kinds of grenadiers using a variety of types of projectile weapons against crowds. These include, but are not limited to, tear gas canisters, projectile rubber batons, rubber bullets, beanbags, wooden dowels, tear gas projectiles (fired from paint ball guns with the same form factor), and water cannons.

An article from the FBI informs about police innovation in crowd control over the past decade. "Riot Response: An Innovative Approach" (1997) distills the lessons of the LA riots into a few simple lessons. This is a lesson you will not see applied in an NG context but only in one where the units are highly trained. Whereas the traditional line formation (the Skirmish Line) has made sense in a variety of contexts, it de-emphasizes mobility and flexibility in the interest of containment and dispersal. The FBI proposes the Augmented Skirmish Line, where squad-level units can act semi-autonomously (they are still directed by a platoon leader), thereby allowing for a greater degree of granularity in achieving primary goals. The second proposal

is the creation of TANGO (Tactically Aggressive and Necessary Gambit of Options) squads. The TANGO squad is essentially a high tech snatch squad that waits behind police lines until deployed against so-called aggressive targets. "The Tango Team can bring to bear the entire spectrum of use-of-force options from command presence through deadly force—in a controlled, self-contained package."

Developing an understanding of the mentality and tactics of state-sponsored groups stands on its own as a worthwhile activity for anti-statists. The state's reliance on simple objectives and techniques to accomplish complicated tasks is a testament to the amount of human, intellectual effort that is put into these problems. The abandonment by the planners and participants in these activities of their own individuality and critical thought is but one horrible consequence. Another is the complex and scientific examination of what works to disturb, terrify, and isolate individuals, done by the planning class and implemented by the participant class. These

processes of social abandonment and social quantification are two mechanisms that anarchists can avoid in their own practice and in their understanding of how to engage with each other. Recognizing these traits in the state's behavior can allow some forewarning of the specifics of their intentions. Developing ideas on how to foil these processes should continue to inspire our activity.



*these are not
undercover cops*

Bob on Science as Capital

Dear Bay Area Anarchist Collective,

I enjoy enigmatic epigrams as much as the next guy, but what does it mean, actually, to say that "Science is Capital"? That it's expensive? Dot Matrix seems to think that saying science is based on "funding" is some sort of objection to it. Anarchist magazines are also based on funding, only not as much. Envy, however, is not argument. "Funding and school credit" are the obessions of a failed graduate student.

Theories cannot be both "predictive hypotheses" and "unit[s] of knowledge" (why not call them facts?), because no amount or arrangement of facts is predictive of anything. Science does not assume that "the world is a frozen (static) place," because it includes dynamic relationships and developmental processes. Since a primary object of scientific study is natural systems, it is of course absurd to fault it as static. Dot's idea of science went out with Linnaeus, if indeed it ever went in.

Anthropology is not "by definition" the scientific study of human groups—all the social sciences do that—it is by definition the study of man by the various methods of biology, archeology, linguistics and ethnology. The latter, the least scientific variety, is the only one Dot is talking about. (Few scientists, incidentally, still speak, as does Dot, of the scientific method.) I have no idea what it means to call even cultural anthropologists "mediators between the civilized and the barbaric," falsely implying that they use this pejorative terminology, nor what it means to say they "are also part of a cultural trajectory that includes missionaries." (Who among us isn't?) Missionaries try to change the natives; ethnographers try not to. Neither missionaries nor anthropologists are mediators, because both communicate cross-culturally in only one direction—but in opposite directions.

The best thinking in the essay is "mediated" from Vine Deloria, Jr., whose polemic against anthropologists would have furnished a far better text. Even his criticisms, however, are outdated commonplaces. Everything he and Dot have to say may be found in the discipline's rich penitential literature going back fifty years. In fact, every-

thing factual Dot says is out of date by fifty to one hundred years. The societies anthropologists study are not frequently described as "primitive," and they have not been exclusively "kin-based" for eighty years. Anthropologists like Robert Redfield and Oscar Lewis noticed that the method of embedded fieldwork is suitable to all kinds of face-to-face communities, not just bands and tribes. They have produced countless studies of peasant communities (in Mexico, India, Sicily, etc.) and more recently urban neighborhoods. They have followed the Indians from the reservations to the big cities.

"The only reason to stay distant from the Other, the whole purpose of an Other, is for control and manipulation." What extravagant nonsense. Has not Dot identified other purposes, such as careerism? Has Dot ever ridden a bus? Or been bothered by salesmen, panhandlers or police? (In Berkeley, of course, these things never happen.) Often you want to keep the Other an Other, not for control or manipulation, but to avoid it.

It is Dot Matrix, not the typical anthropologist, who essentializes the natives by positing an Authenticity which the anthropologists (Other to the Other) with their metaphorical test tubes will never experience. Has Dot experienced it? If not, how does Dot know that they falsify? By now, a lot of anthropologists, especially in the United States, are natives (Jomo Kenyatta, first president of Kenya, was a British-trained social anthropologist), and many natives read the books written about them. Jack Goode returned after twenty years to the African scene of his original fieldwork to find that the locals were citing his monographs in lawsuits.

To me, there is nothing scandalous about supposing that someone from another culture might understand it better, on some levels, than some or all of those who live it. Any economist of any nationality understands important aspects of my country better than I do. In some ways, from reading maybe twenty books, I understand the Roman Empire better than any Roman ever could. A Swedish economist, Gunnar Myrdal, probably understood American race relations in the 1940s better than any American, black or white. The "emic" and "etic" (internal and external) perspectives are complementary; neither should be privileged. Dot is a

Have something to say? WRITE US

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When necessary we will edit letters for redundancy, length, illegibility and/or death threats. (Ellipses in italicized brackets [...] indicate an edit.)

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hierarchy. Trying to come across as a champion (self-appointed) of the native experience, Dot instead exhibits intolerant hostility toward epistemological pluralism, and should stand in the corner reading Paul Feyerabend to Fred Woodworth. But I have a question which I answered, I suspect, in my first paragraph. Do you have to be an anthropologist to understand the culture called anthropology? Is Dot an anthropologist? Or maybe a failed graduate student?

It's tremendously exciting writing this, not knowing whom I am insulting!

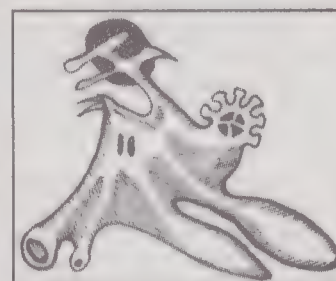
Hooray for Captain Spaulding!

Bob Black

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Jason on Science as Capital

Dear Dot,

It is good that the arguments presented in "Science as Capital" (*Anarchy* #61, Spring/Summer 2006) have definite bite. And they will probably stimulate some response in the letters section (as long as most readers aren't brain dead). However, I think you could

develop a much more effective critique (effective from my perspective, at least—from your perspective you may have different priorities) if you were less globally aggressive in your attacks on science and anthropology, and a lot more nuanced and relativistic instead.

For example, your critique reads to me as being very brash and impulsive in some major ways, almost caricaturing what you critique to the point that it becomes a false portrait which tends to lose the interest of readers like myself, who would prefer less black-and-white posturing and more exploration of grey areas. In the first place anthropology isn't merely a science and has never been merely a science. Some of the things you criticize anthropology in general for being are really only aspects of the scientific tendencies of anthropology and aren't true in anything like all instances of anthropological practice. You write as though you are possibly unfamiliar with the development of modern scientific anthropology from out of philosophical anthropology, or at least, as though you feel that philosophical anthropology has been absolutely eclipsed and doesn't need to even or ever be mentioned (which I feel is far from true). If you read the essay on the anthropological investigation of the post-situationist milieu by Karen Goaman ("Oppositional Currents and the Art of Anthropology") that I sent last week (and which will appear in the first issue of the new journal *Modern Slavery*), you'll recognize that while she is practicing anthropology (and is even doing so from within a university setting), she isn't practicing any sort of scientific anthropology, which results in her work

being defined by your critique as either non-anthropological, or as some sort of anomaly that would be meaningless in an overview of the subject. From my perspective, I think her work is almost cutting-edge anthropology and in the future will be recognized as such by an increasing number of other self-critical, practicing anthropologists (though, probably not by any means a majority of anthropologists as long as most anthropological institutions and investigations are organized and funded by state and capital). My point is that capital and state influences tend to permeate every aspect of life, but rather than reject life or all of its individual constituents (from anthropology to art to everything else) it makes more sense to make a more nuanced critique of the dominant (capitalist/statist/hierarchical) trends which still leaves some room for the minority tendencies which are often there (unless the institution or practice being discussed is clearly and absolutely tied to hierarchy, market-relations, etc.).

A similar argument can be made with regard to science more generally. While it has largely been captured and constrained by capitalist and statist interests, historically this has not always (and during particular periods often not at all) been the case. It remains definitely possible in my opinion for scientific practices to operate outside of the caricature of science you have constructed, though it is also true that for general shorthand purposes a critique like yours can be made which will work well enough for dealing with 95% (and maybe even 99%) of actual scientific practices here and now. Still, to be accurate, and to not perpetuate a falsely totalistic critique, I prefer to at least give a hint of the areas of actual and potential (and historical) scientific practice which lies outside of your critique.

Take care,

Jason McQuinn

Dot responds:

I agree that my argument is simplistic along the lines that you say. While I did read and include information from a couple of recent texts, my point was not to write a careful study of today's anthropology, which would necessarily include whatever details run counter to the main thrust of how capital and Control Society work through science in general and that field of science in particular. As you acknowledge, your response demonstrates a difference in our priorities. I would categorize your focus as primarily his-

torical—meaning carefully factual, scrupulously specific, detail oriented in exactly the way you say you wish the article were. I would label my interest, on the other hand, as more philosophical, emphasizing broad brush strokes, a feel for how associations and context work, more impasto than pointillist. I know that the historically minded people will read this as an excuse for sloppiness, just as I sometimes get frustrated with historically minded people for focusing too much on punctuation and correct dates, rather than on information that is more relevant to me.

The weakness of philosophical or broad brush writing is obvious: without enough fact to back up ideas, the ideas either are or seem to be mere personal ponderings. The strength of it, however, can be that it doesn't get tied down in arguments about what year something happened, or whether the latest theories are relevant or not. In this case, I happily concede that the most up-to-date anthropology might well seem more personal, more human, more respectful, less scientific. But I don't think that that changes the message in the article, which is about trajectory, assumption, and yet another way we participate in the otherification of ourselves and each other.

I believe that there will always be people who find ways to make their practices more human, more appropriate, no matter how bad the institution they operate within. But to address those is frequently to take the focus away from the momentum of the tradition, to distract with details.

The strength of labeling a particular kind of dehumanized interaction and expectation (in this case as scientific) comes from how much it allows us to look at things differently, to question something that we have been encouraged to take for granted.

There will of course be people for whom my method and writing don't work, and I hope I am being realistically humble, rather than cavalier, by acknowledging that. (I believe that your 99%, or even 95%, is enough for me.)

That said, I value both pointillism and impasto, and I definitely welcome your critique along these lines. It is good for me to be reminded of what I am leaving out, what assumptions I make about my audience, and to remember that philoso-

phy and history are not polar binaries, but can combine pleasantly, like peanut butter and jelly.

Kropotkin, Rolling Over in His Grave

Dear Anarchy Staff,
SCIENCE IS COLLECTIVE

A different conception of society, very different from that which now prevails, is in process of formation. Under the name of Anarchy, a new interpretation of the past and present life of society arises, giving at the same time a forecast as regards its future, both conceived in the same spirit as the above-mentioned interpretation in natural sciences.

- Peter Kropotkin¹

While I agree with a significant portion of the critique of science by Dot Matrix, he unfortunately falls prey to a number of fallacies in his argument.

I'll admit at the outset that I may be biased in my approach to this issue. I've studied what I believe to be science for approximately six years and plan to continue as I work towards the completion of my doctorate in evolutionary anthropology. I've found that a scientific understanding of the natural world has enriched my anarchist principles. So, with that perspective, I was a little surprised to learn that, despite my best intentions, the entire purpose of my endeavors to date has been to "stay distant from the Other" for the sole purpose of "control and manipulation."

Dot Matrix states that science is largely viewed as "the modern problem-solving technique" but is troubled that "even people who are critical of most other aspects of the culture we live in, find themselves reverting to science when pushed to defend their ideas."

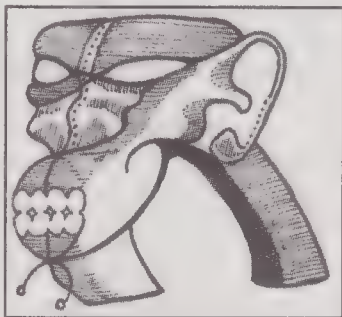
This is bad, he informs us, because science "maintains and relies on a perspective of the world as a frozen (static) place," and is a methodology that emphasizes "reproducibility," "causality (that a thing or event causes another thing or event)" and promotes "the relevance of things (material reality) over all else." From this perspective, science dictates that "everything can be broken down into discrete, quantifiable parts" and that "the whole is never more than the sum of its parts."

There is some truth to what he says.

For example, to use Bertrand Russell's analogy, if we see a cat on one side of the room and then, after being distracted, we see it on the opposite side, the most reasonable explanation is that the cat physically traversed that distance. We could, if we wanted, suppose that a wormhole opened and the cat was transported to that location (or perhaps it was a malicious angel sent to confuse us), but since we're not confident about the reality of wormholes or angels (nor of their habit of singling out stray felines) we can confidently discount those possibilities for the time being. The same applies to all natural phenomena (however Dot Matrix has clearly never seen the bitter arguments that occur over which interpretation best fits the evidence or he could never state that science "emphasizes a specific perspective on material reality.")

Dot Matrix is also correct that many scientists (though certainly not all, such as systems theorists) incorporate reductionism into their approach in order to understand complex phenomena, by breaking them down into easier to understand components. However, I've yet to meet anyone actually engaging in science who believes that, say, understanding electron transport within synaptic neurons is all you need to explain the joy felt while listening to music. But, certainly, an understanding of why cancerous cells mutate would go a long way to understanding the disease at large (as would understanding the lifestyle of the person afflicted). In the same way, Kropotkin (and Marx) used reductionism in their arguments to promote their political theories.

But reductionism as the ultimate explanation is a commonly held fallacy about science that hasn't changed since William Blake condemned the evils of "single vision and Newton's sleep" at the turn of the 19th century. At that time scientists really did believe that if you had enough facts about the universe, you could predict everything about future outcomes (Newton, like many early scientists, viewed his research as determining God's plan). But no one today, outside of a few crackpots, would imagine that if you had precise measurements of wind speed, barometric pressure, relative humidity and temperature that you could predict the exact motions of a leaf caught in a summer breeze, let alone the universe as a whole. However, one could predict, within a fairly reliable probabil-



ity, how far and in what direction such a leaf would travel under such conditions. This is the same principle by which models of global warming are generated.

Science operates through making predictions (hypotheses) and, if those predictions fail (repetition) the hypothesis is abandoned. It's the process of making a reasoned argument about the natural world. In order to make a reasoned argument you have to agree on certain axioms, otherwise you might as well debate in different languages for all of the sense it will make. So, while I'm not sure what Dot Matrix means by "a perspective of the world as a frozen (static) place" I can only presume he's referring to the laws of physics. However, I seriously doubt he's stating that the laws of gravity or thermodynamics are as arbitrary as the laws of the State. But if he wants to believe that, no scientist will force him to do otherwise.

However, Dot Matrix is dead on when he critiques how science has been abused by the State. Whether you're talking about capitalists, fascists or communists, the State has routinely politicized science to further its grasp on power (including anthropology, in which 1/3 of all grants in the 1960s were from the CIA 2). It is this that makes most leftists shun science as a whole (and why people immediately presume evolutionary interpretations of human behavior are one step away from Dr. Mengele's views on eugenics). However, if we're going to abandon science on those grounds we're also going to have to abandon philosophy, art, literature and music for also being employed by the powerhungry on a routine basis to further their own ends (while remembering Mengele, people routinely forget Rosenberg and Riefenstahl and the role of art in the Nazi movement).

But Dot Matrix seems to be of the opinion that facts don't matter, that any wild speculation is as relevant as a controlled experiment and that science has no place in his revolution (a view that Kropotkin would heartily disagree with). However, I don't believe that the politics of exclusion is a healthy point of view as we work towards building another world. I'm of the opinion that we should use any tool and any method if it furthers our collective goal of human freedom. I view a proper understanding of science to be a dual-purpose tool that anyone can employ, akin to, say, a hammer. Frequently it is used to build the

edifice of State power, but it can also be used to undermine and dismantle it.

Moebius Cube

¹Kropotkin, "Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal" (1896), <http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Kropotkin>

²Church Committee Reports, Book I.X. The Domestic Impact of Foreign Clandestine Operations: The CIA and Academic Institutions, The Media, And Religious Institutions, p. 182; http://www.aarc-library.org/publib/church/reports/book1/pdf/ChurchB1_10_Domestic.pdf

Dot responds:

What is the viability of cherry picking? Is it appropriate to isolate one fundamental aspect of a cultural understanding (in this case, whatever you consider to be the good points of science) from the rest of that culture, (in this case the Control Society that we presumably both hate)? If the Science article raised any hint of this question for you, then I consider it worth the time you spent reading it.

Your examples of how excellently science has answered the questions that science has asked are not compelling to me.

But perhaps that is because I am "of the opinion that facts don't matter." (Ah facts, my good friends...)

Or maybe I just haven't yet recovered from my abrupt and unplanned sex change.

Kind Words

Hi Everyone in *Anarchy*:

I am sending you some extra money along with my subscription renewal. Please use it as you see fit. The work you are all doing is important. When your magazine comes to me it is like a fresh breeze that clears some of the foul politics out of my brain. I have been out of the mass media loop for some time now and it has become very clear to me that your writing is vital to opening the minds of the people looking for something better than the lesser evil that is offered. I am sorry that I do not have more to give, but after the four hurricanes and the flood from Wilma last year, I am in debt up to my ears. I salute your courage in the face of the massive repression that the government is creating. I also feel for you because of the attacks that you are getting from some strident ranting readers. If I might make a suggestion it would be that you should try to fight back with more kindness. We need all the friends we can

get. Your fight against the Powers That Be though is wonderful to read. Do not pull any punches in your criticism there. That is why I like you so much. If any of you are visiting the Keys and would like to visit or whatever please feel free to get in touch. If there is ever a homeland it is you.

GT

The Keys, Florida

AJODA responds:

Thank you so much for your generous gift, made even more thoughtful by this letter, and information about your straitened circumstances.

Your point about kind fighting is an ongoing question, addressed in some ways by "Trying for Springs" in this issue. How to determine when we are acknowledging what exists vs when we are making things worse is always a negotiation.

Of course, sometimes we make mistakes.

Best of luck to you and we will certainly mail you if we're ever in the Keys. And please let us know if you ever come to the bay area.

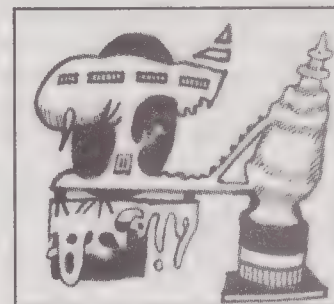
Local Terrorists in Texas?

There is but one ethical standard for the state as well as the individual.

Dear C.A.L. Press:

On April 26, 2006 I received a copy of your current *Anarchy* and other materials from Prisoner Literature Project in San Francisco. I am not sure why although I suspect that from somewhere it had to do with my piece in *The Die*. An excellent publication. Just so, I really do believe an intellectual-impartial reading of the first five (5) books of the new testament reveal a Jesus who is accurately described as a "religious ethical anarchist." On the textual evidence alone, that is the only plausible rational conclusion I can draw. I do have a long but loose association with the Catholic Worker Movement; the last time I was in the Catholic Worker was December 2000, page 8.

Where in the world is Tennessee Colony, Texas? It is in Anderson County, Texas. The county seat of Anderson Co. is Palestine, Texas. Local residents are called Palestinians. You have no doubt heard of Palestinians. This is the part of East Texas over which the space shuttle Columbia blew up. Whether local Palestinian terrorists were involved in that is an open question. This is a major pris-



on county, with at least 5 prisons of size located here. Only a huge input of state dollars keep the county going. It is also the "heart" of klan country. Don't you wish you were here? About 85 miles ESE of Dallas. So now you know.

I read your publication thoroughly. Some of which I found informative, some verbose, some worthless, and some fascinating. Years ago I spent time in the Mexican state of Coahuila, where the Magons were better remembered than the book review by Rob los Ricos. People who were consistently outspoken during the lengthy Mexican Revolution did not survive it. And even wishy-washy Villa came to a very bad end, after the Revolution was more or less over. Whether or not Mexicans historical opposition to their government has more to do with anarchism. Or a horror at the endemic and notorious corruption/dishonesty duplicity of government employees is an interesting question: I suspect it is the latter, more than the former. In a country where everything revolves around the mordida (bribe) of course people routinely hate the government, its officials and employees.

After thoroughly reading your article about The Association of Autonomous Astronauts (page 72), I was sold. Please send me some snazzy decals with the logo and my memberships card. Immediately if not sooner. You can use hot air balloons for part of your venture. The country is full of hot air, nowadays. Especially in an election year. I nominate myself to be president of the Texas chapter of your association of autonomous astronauts. I can pay an dues via I.O.U./credit. It's the American way. I think you should eliminate use of the word "Oakland" in your astronaut logo and substitute "International." Oakland got a lot of bad publicity when Al Davis once moved the Raiders and insulted local residents. And Jerry Brown didn't help. Maybe Ron Dellums can save Oakland from itself.

Politics is the art of seizing power

for economic reasons. Appropriately, I absolutely refuse to engage in a debate with you troublemakers as to if your Republican governor is a bigger turd than our Republican governor. If you think I am going to climb down to the bottom of any privy and start examining turds you are MISTAKEN. That is what the US lets illegal aliens into the country for. God bless America! Nor will I engage in mischievous, malicious comments about our President and Commander-in-Chief, Jorge (pronounced "whore-hey!" in Spanish) Bush. When he says that when he talks with/to God, God pays attention, he believes that. And you will too – if you smoke enough dope. Have you forgotten? Ronald Ray-gun, suffering from dementia and obvious Alzheimers, ran the country for 8 years using astrology. And Nancy. A city in France. No wonder some Americans have a grudge against France. If the American people want to elect intellectual Ronald McDonalds and sleazy religious con artists, so what? Someone has to fleece the sheep.

One can learn a lot from elections. I did in 1976. First the country is overloaded with bona fide idiots, morons and imbeciles – all of whom actually went out and voted for Gerry Ford! One of their own. That was like picking your teeth with a fork. Jimma Carter had the right idea. He promised that if elected he would "open all the government's books on U.F.O.s, remember? I certainly do. That suggested openness appealed to a lot of people. Of course he was lying to beat the band. But it sure sounded good, and it worked. Then, if you remember, he messed up and said, "if you ever catch me lying, don't vote for me." Indeed he did. Well, he got taken seriously on that too! We were not fooled by his "openness" and "get clean with gene." A quality human being. Got about a million votes. The point is this: you all should give strong consideration to what Carter said, but in a broad way. That is to politically support a politician who agrees in writing – with indemnity for non-compliance – to open all the books. No exceptions. After all it is the American people who are paying for everything. Footing the bill. The very idea that people who pay all the bills are being deliberately kept in the dark and lied to about what they are paying for is repugnant, indecent, corrupt, sneaky, duplicitous, condescending, patronizing, deceitful, you

name it. Enron didn't want to open the books. Crooks never do. I would suggest you develop this theme. It makes you look good and the opposition look bad. And you have an unlimited number of detractors. The idea of "opening all the books" resonates with a lot of people, e.g. any and all records would automatically be made open after 5 years from their date.

"Well," you say, "if the government officials came clean and opened all the books, to the people who pay all the bills, the Government might well collapse from the weight of its own corruption." Indeed? I hadn't thought of that.

Robert J. Zani
No. 328938
Michael Unit
PO Box 4500
Tennessee Colony, TX 75886

Discontented with The Brilliant

The Brilliant and Their Discontents
All our ideas are brilliant aren't they? At least to us. At least for a while. But brilliance is as brilliance does, to be a touch cliché. Whether a welcome light in the dreaded darkness, a gleam against the tarnished and dull, or the extraordinary (intelligence, talent, leader, artist) among the plain, brilliance is perceived as superior, preferable, desirable. Even Special. Is this true of AJODA's The Brilliant, those "discontents" of security culture?

The Brilliant - we do not know who they are since they choose to hide behind a false name—have pretty words with which to pronounce their many beliefs.

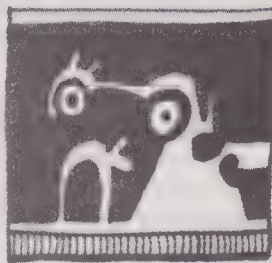
"We do not believe that anything we do, except the most blatantly scandalous, should be hidden behind false names, secret communication, and indecipherable jargon."

"We do not believe that anything, or nearly anything, that we do is truly hidden from eyes that are looking in our direction."

"We believe that if they want to find us they are more than capable."

"We believe, in our heart of hearts, that our security culture friends embarrass us."

"We deeply believe that the majority of the world basks in the light of the



same sun that we are shielded from by the State and Capitalism."

And like most good pontificators, they believe they know how everyone else is supposed to behave. Which is definitely not like children. They elaborate "Our pretensions of illegality and danger look exactly like what they are, children at play. As long as anarchists remain children we will be treated as such, by our potential allies, by our enemies, and by ourselves." They also know a lot about the "Operation Backfire" prisoners, pronouncing with barely disguised derision, "Many of the accused who... had moved on with their lives and away from radical politics... were very young and new to radicalism... reached far beyond their grasp..."

Now, we don't know anything about The B's—how could we? We were excluded from their particular tree house before we even knew they had one. Perhaps it is because of our dreadlock cooties. But we sure have a hard time imagining they do much outlaw living (or should I use AJODA parlance of the moment, "extralegal"), since they have some odd notions of why folks choose to move in different ways at different times, in different guises. Shame is the oddest notion they proffer, that's for certain.

The B's attribute "shame" to those who use names other than the Judeo-Christian, pop-culture icon, fully legal ones handed down to us by others. Shame for the way we live. But, it is far more interesting, wild and crazy than a silly worry about what moralists might think of us. "They" do have a lot of spies, but we don't fear them. We play with them as certainly as they do with us. And we like it when we get to decide. When we choose our strategies and methods on our terms. Sometimes we do-the-do with our legal names, other times with names we think suit us better in the moment. We may use silly or fun or serious roles as we maneuver around this gnarly old System. Exploring, learning and testing. Poking,

prodding, snatching. Enjoying as many moments of (un)civilized abandonment that we can.

Sometimes we play darkly in the shadows. At others, perhaps, we are brilliant too: clear, sparkling, and glowing—the passion on our faces an invitation to play as well. But, we have come to know, too closely for some of us, the dangers too bright a light can be. There is many an enlightened being capable of drawing the unwitting moth to the flame. To their death—most often a living death.

Then again, perhaps The B's are correct! They certainly understand, as we do, that security as a "culture"—something adopted or donned according to the latest fashion—is not going to accomplish anything resembling safety. We've learned this comes best through a much deeper connection. With ourself, each other, and with our surroundings as we dig at the roots of what oppresses us. We have experienced the comfort our senses and inner voices and gut are capable of when unencumbered by too many have-tos and must-dos. They are our most intimate companions as we play our games of the city, the road, the desert, and wood. Wherever we go, our friends rarely embarrass us. We give each other a lot of space to express our uniqueness. If someone appears to be treading in areas that might thwart our desire and intent to anarchy, we say so. Directly and clearly, leaving lots of room for the possibility that our embarrassment sometimes comes from an unconscious adherence to society's behavioral norms.

We would get great pleasure in knowing that The Brilliant will be leaping from the shadows into the limelight. But since they believe that we should not use false names except for the most "scandalous" activities, we have to wonder? Is this bit of pseudo-poesy the kind of rad-outrageousness we can anticipate from the enlightened ones? (And is the picture AJODA selected to illustrate their proclamation really a young man burning his draft card?)

The Merely Clever

Kevin Tucker on Kaczynski

If Ted's interview wasn't bad enough the first time around, reprinting it just offers some validation as the title 'Primitivist Myths' implies. That it was

anthropologically 'fact checked' made it even worse. Did anyone even bother to read the whole thing? What anyone who reads it with any grain of salt walks away with is that Ted has little grasp on the concept of anarcho-primitivism (AP), green anarchy (GA), or anything of the sort. This coming despite years of effort on the part of myself, John Zerzan, and the many others who've attempted to deal with Ted's methodical and ideologically bound arguments.

His arguments are just bullshit. Point by point (each referring to primitive societies);

I. Hunting and gathering societies were vegan: Hunting is a part of the descriptive title. Anyone who claims that gatherer/hunters were or are vegan is simply a moron. It's that simple. This has nothing to do with an AP perspective even if the interviewers were vegan and AP. Ted conflates animal rights with AP/GA, etc., and I'd hope that not only would people understand that rights are contrary to anarchy, but that rights are inclusive to civilization and liberation is exclusive. It's not that difficult really.

II. Most primal societies were "cruel to animals": Case points of cruelty are different than a society being "cruel to animals". Humans are not perfect, nor is any animal and nor should they be. Things happen all the time that are far from ideal. I agree with Ted, we shouldn't try and make some principles about how you should always act towards each other or other species, but is this something that the AP/GA milieu is guilty of? I don't think so.

Animal liberation is about ending the systemic torture and enslavement of animals, not their pain and ultimate deaths. You'll find similar acts of 'cruelty' throughout all species, and while I'm not so keen on it, I don't want to suppose that I know more than they do. Is toying with a wounded or dead animal an act of sedition or a means to familiarize the young with the animals their existence is tied to? More often than not, I'd say the latter is true, but does that mean the former doesn't happen? Of course not, but that doesn't negate AP either.

III. Lack of gender equality: This is really another groundball issue and one I'd hope other anarchists would be able to notice quickly. Equality is an issue of equal rights. That's a legal issue. Egalitarianism is about equal access and treatment. That's a social issue. Nomadic gatherer-hunter societies lack not only

the existence of the former, but the socio-political institutions that would make an issue at all. They are, however, the most egalitarian societies to have existed.

Ted brings the point home by drawing on 'wife beating' among the Mbuti without realizing he disproves himself in the same quote: "...and the wife is expected to fight back." Patriarchy is asserted not by violence or male violence, but by institutionalizing a subservient role among women that includes a virtue of not fighting back. Simply put, non-egalitarian societies turn women into persons without agency. Women in nomadic gatherer-hunter and horticultural societies typically not only instigate fights, retaliate, defend themselves as individuals or a group, withhold food and other social contributions, but refuse to see themselves as victims of a situation where they have no control. They are autonomous and not dependents. That comes back to egalitarianism.

And that comes back to Ted's inclusion of the examples that Ted includes among the Siriono which show clear concepts of patriarchal domination and a preference for males. This is common among horticulturalists where sedentism, population growth and their consequences lay root to civilized thinking and behavior, which is why AP draws on domestication. Having concepts and socializing them are two different things as Yolanda and Robert Murphy's classic *Women in the Forest* shows to anyone who actually looks into the female perspective of this 'male domination'. Not surprisingly, they go through the ritual and religious motions without ever granting full authority to the males. It's a show that occasionally lands off stage.

Again, domestication is the key. The Inuit and Aborigines have similar concepts of a male defined religious order but possess domesticated dogs that carry their surplus society and high rates of sedentism or close contact with sedentary societies respectively.

Far from proving points of AP 'myths', Ted has merely glossed over the efforts of people like myself who've spent the bulk of their effort looking at these 'grey areas' of domestication and sedentism to look at the 'ugly' and 'unromantic' sides of primal life and understand what exactly they might mean.

IV. 'Original Affluent Society' or lack of work thesis: This has been a point of contention since Marshall Sahlins declared it in the mid-1960s. It has been

argued furiously on both sides and there are case points that show that some nomadic gatherer-hunter societies 'work' for 20-30 hours a week and others that show other bands 'work' for twice that or more. It comes down to a band by band basis and can't be said to be wholly true or false.

I agree that emphasis shouldn't be placed on the arbitrary distinction of 'work' and 'non-work' but on the existence of work itself. Work is something you do for someone else. It's a job whether it is working a field to create an agricultural surplus or selling electronics in a chain store. Nomadic gatherer-hunters, like most in primal societies, don't work, period. Leisure is the sacred cow of a capitalist society and there is nothing to be gained from feeding it.

However, disagreeing with the terminology does not debase the entire argument or point of the argument. I think this is an issue and avoid those terms, but Ted has elevated this point to ridiculous degrees as if to challenge the basics of AP theory in general. I just don't see it.

V. Most of these societies were non-violent: There's no grounding for this argument. There is no war among nomadic gatherer-hunters because they lack the motivations and social context for it. If you have a fluid band composition that includes people from all bands that you would potentially be warring with, there's not much reason or incentive to war. War arises with the material and ecological needs of semi-sedentary societies where kinship is central (as relates to ownership and production of gardens) and hence solidified enough to create an 'us' and 'them'.

Violence does happen and possibly more often among nomadic gatherer-hunters who take their affairs into their own hands. But the violence is an outburst without the drama or mask of being a society of strangers. It is kept in check by social reality and rarely escalates as the offending parties can either get over it or split apart. The stagnancy of sedentism is what amplifies the roots of violence and makes war possible.

VI. Competition and violent competition exist: This revolves around a line from Ted: "If a physical fight isn't a form of competition, then nothing is." And that is patently false. Fights occur because all animals have a vast range of emotion, not because we see the world as an ordered hierarchy that we must



assert ourselves within. Most fights do deal with relationships not because of 'access to mates', but because anyone who's been in a relationship can tell you that they are highly emotional things and that a sexual or loving relationship has so many more layers of emotion and bonding to them that they often cause emotional outbursts of all types.

'Arguments about food' are often indicative of feelings in general. And what is referred to as an argument here is more like the heckling that goes on incessantly among nomadic gatherer-hunters. It's a social check, but a light hearted one. Arguments do happen over food, but only an outsider geared to think in crudely scientific simplicity would see them as competition. Fights and arguments do occur without conspiracy or grand schemes.

VII. Damage to the environment: This point goes unsubstantiated and is questionable. Again, humans are no angels, but it serves no purpose to 'drain the pond upon which one sleeps'. Over hunting, I can guess refers to the highly contested 'overkill theories'. And where is the "reckless use of fire"? Fire was often used and to favor the growth of certain plants, but hardly was it ever reckless.

Unfortunately there isn't space given here to really go point by point, so I'll leave this for common sense. Ted is a revolutionary in the strict sense. His goals cannot be blurred by visions of what has or could be. I appreciate those who push aside utopian thinking, but it's one thing to draw on murky areas and another to essentially turn the utopianism on its head and toss the whole thing out.

And, last I checked, anarchy works because of personal responsibility. Moralistic? Maybe it's not the primitivists who need their 'romanticism' checked...

For wildness and anarchy,
Kevin Tucker

Correction:

The correct address for *No Quarter* (reviewed in issue #61) is captainm
issionismycopilot@hotmail.com

WHAT KIND OF HUMAN ARE YOU?

Check all that apply or write in your own answers.
Copy the questionnaire and mail it back to us at:

C.A.L. Press - Questionnaire
PO Box 3448
Berkeley, CA 94703

Keep a copy of your responses to find out how you measure up. Rating scale and responses for this questionnaire will be published in the next issue.

Or fill out the questionnaire on line at:
<http://www.anarchymag.org>

How often do you socialize?

- ☐ every chance I get ☐ only on weekends
☐ at every rally ☐ does filling this out count?

How many hours a week do you "work"?

- ☐ work IS play; none ☐ 0-20 hours
☐ 20-40 hours ☐ 40-60 hours of slavery

How often do you touch another person?

- ☐ at least once an hour ☐ a few times a day
☐ a few times a month ☐ not since the 60s

How many times a day do you eat with other people?

- ☐ every meal ☐ once a day ☐ are you calling me fat?
☐ I eat once a day while blogging anarchist websites

The most important human attribute is:

- ☐ there is no such thing ☐ the ability to love
☐ our unsurpassed intellect ☐ gender and race

How do you feel about sexual encounters?

- ☐ is it hot in here? ☐ I wouldn't turn one down
☐ only with protection ☐ no thanks

What makes you laugh most often?

- ☐ my friend cracks a joke ☐ someone trips
☐ watching tv ☐ I'm drunk or stoned

How often do you dream of escaping to the wild?

- ☐ wild is a state of mind ☐ every hour, every day
☐ while I commute ☐ never; I'd die in the wild

How often do you defend yourself?

- ☐ every day I fight the state, my boss and my landlord
☐ as often as I think I might win
☐ whenever I get drunk ☐ violence is wrong

How often do you groom yourself?

- ☐ daily, like every other self respecting animal
☐ does that include wiping my butt? ☐ once a week
☐ grooming is bourgeois; filth is radical

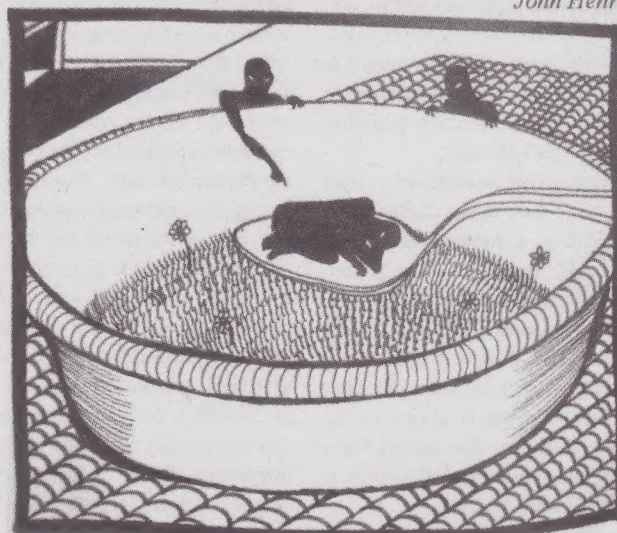
Scoring for Last Online Poll: "How Left Are You?"

Bubbles are numbered from the left to the right and from the top to the bottom. For all questions EXCEPT 9, give yourself 1 point for choosing the first bubble, 2 for bubble two, 3 for bubble three, 4 points for bubble four. For question 9 reverse the order of the points. If you answered more than one bubble in a question, give yourself the average value of the two answers.

Add all your points together for the survey.

If you wrote in your own answers subtract 1 point for each extra answer; you are happily not confined by our definitions.

John Henri

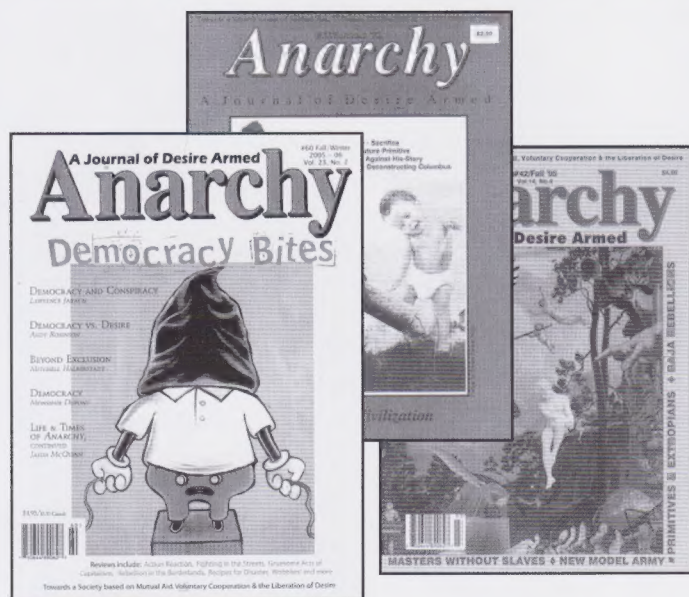


Use your total to compare:

Total Points		Responders with this Score
0-11	Congratulations! You are a post-left anarchist.	107
12-22	You're on the right track. Attending a study group will hone your theories.	42
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